

**AMIGA Inc.** A new US Amiga Company?

# Amazing / AMIGA

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Volume 12 No. 10 October 1997  
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**REVIEWS!**

## PageMonster

Advanced Web Page Authoring

## Aladdin 4D Version 5

Nova Design's newly  
revised 3D program!

## PC-Task 4 and Pcx:

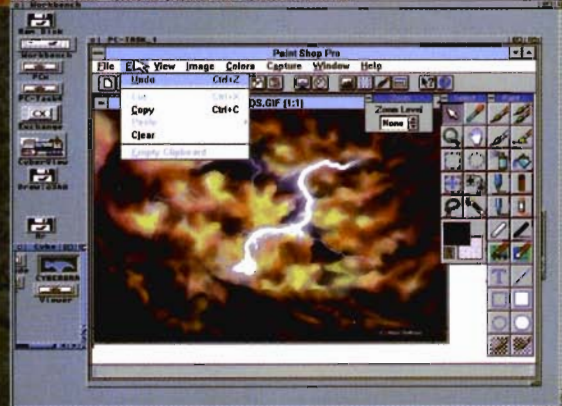
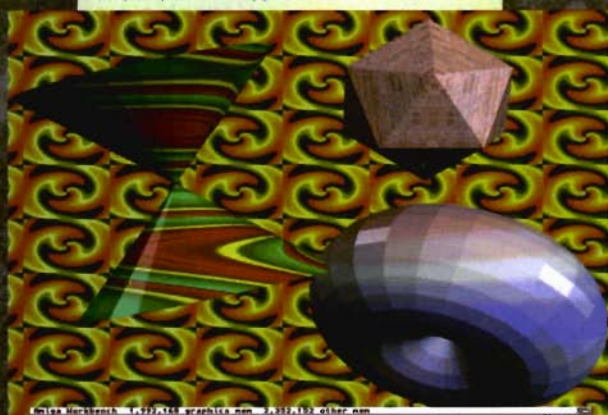
Emulating the PC

## DKB's 3128 and 2631

Memory Boards

**PLUS!**

An Exclusive Interview With  
Petro Tyschtschenko  
Tooling Shells  
JAVA news  
and more.



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# An Open Letter to the Amiga Community

To: The Amiga Community

From: David A. Ziembicki  
CEO, QuikPak Corporation

It has been a while since I wrote to the Amiga Community. As those reading this already know, we published a letter welcoming Gateway 2000 and reinforcing our desire to continue to support the Amiga as we have in the past. To this end we have met with Gateway 2000, proposed various new products including our advertised A4040L, A4060L, and A1630. Gateway warned us early on that they are very meticulous in planning and that they would need time to review our product proposals and to see how they fit with their plans. By the time you read this, we will have met with Gateway 2000 to discuss these and other products.

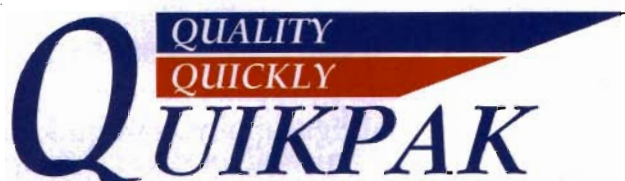
Many have asked why we are not shipping the new products and have pointed out that we have been advertising them for months. The answer is that in order to utilize the Amiga chip set and OS, we need to be licensed by the owner of this technology, Gateway 2000. We are currently in negotiations for such a license and we are hopeful that these negotiations will be completed shortly and we can move forward quickly with an exciting line of new Amiga products.

This transition hasn't been without problems. We are aware of the difficulty some of you have had in reaching us lately, and of some delay in obtaining support. We have addressed the majority of these problems and anticipate that all of you will be satisfied with the results. We have changed our Web site and domain name. Our new site is QuikPak.com and we have added some new features to enhance customer service and make communicating with us easier. Please visit our site often as this along with our advertising here will be our primary means of keeping the Amiga community up to date.

Finally, my thanks to all of the loyal QuikPak / Amiga customers. We truly appreciate your support.

P.S. Please excuse the WIN 95 screen shot on the A4040L, we're just kidding.

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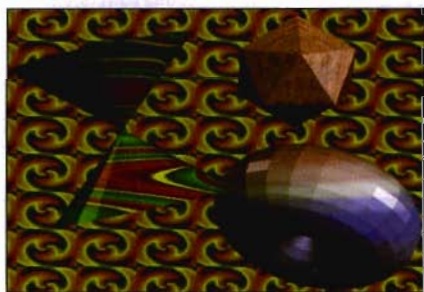


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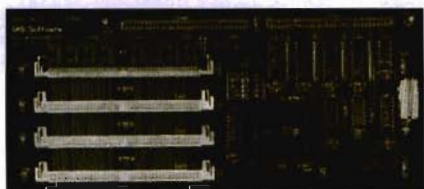
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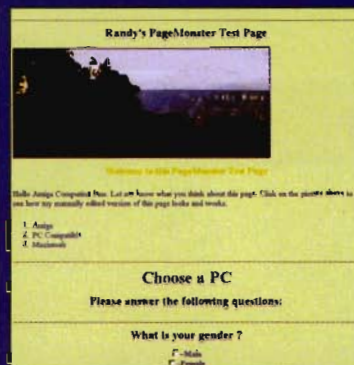
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# Editorial Content

## Amiga Inc. Microsoft + Apple The world just got more interesting.

We have had an interesting Summer. From the UPS strike which caused a considerable amount of problems (including a difficult time getting this issue to the press) to the shocking announcement that Apple and Microsoft were going to play well with each other, things have been unusual.

### Enter Amiga Inc.

Apparently, Gateway 2000 has not been sitting idle. As this issue goes to press, we have learned that the Amiga has another new company, Amiga Inc. Although no official press release has been issued by Gateway 2000, AC has learned that Amiga Inc. (see page 12) does exist and is building itself a home near Gateway 2000's offices.

In the interview with Petro Tyschtschenko on page 48 we learn that Amiga Inc. will become the research and development facility for the Amiga. Petro will continue to be Managing Director of Amiga International Inc. in Germany. The two companies will work as a team to create and sell Amigas.

This is good news for most Amiga enthusiasts. Many people have been waiting to see what Gateway would do before they would commit to their own course of action. With a development team in motion, many developers can now hope to see a new operating system and new machines. Good thing too, now that the Amiga is the largest independent Operating System.

### Apple + Microsoft?

Everyone loves to hate Microsoft. Amiga users almost do it as a chant. They know their Amiga OS is older but it still can do things their friends using Windows 95 cannot. They feel vindicated every time they hear a PC user struggling to purchase an extra 8 or 16 MB of memory just to keep their software and system functioning. However, Macintosh users are even more outspoken.

Never mind the early work performed at the Xerox Palo Alto Research Center (PARC), Macintosh owners believe Apple invented the GUI (Graphical User Interface) and, at one time, Apple believed this themselves. Apple believed it so much, they entered into a multi-year court battle with Microsoft to protect the "look and feel" of the Macintosh OS and lost. So, from these two tyrants in the computer industry, we should expect continued competition—right? Wrong.

### Breaking The News

August 6th was a warm Wednesday morning in Boston as Steve Jobs walked onto a stage in front of hundreds of loyal Macintosh users. Apple was under fire. They

had just reported losses of 50 plus million dollars (actually, this was greeted with great relief since financial analysts had expected over a 100 million in losses). Their CEO had just resigned after an eighteen month run of more declining sales. Apple needed a home run, but some say Jobs stole bases instead.

Steve Jobs was probably the only person in the world who could go before that crowd and introduce Bill Gates as a new partner for Apple. After Gates' large image filled the stage (seeing the tape, I was reminded of Apple's original "1984" commercial for the Macintosh) and spoke of the confidence he had in working with Apple, Jobs continued to tell his audience that Microsoft would invest \$150 million dollars into Apple, Apple and Microsoft would settle their lawsuits now and in the future for an undisclosed amount to be paid to Apple, and Microsoft and Apple would share licensing and product information.

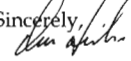
In short, for one-third of what Microsoft paid for WebTV and 1/2 of the marketing budget for the Windows 95 introduction two years ago, Microsoft stopped the government and was awarded a front row seat to Apples research and development. That was a very smart purchase. But, Jobs was no slouch himself. Apple also gets an inside look at Microsoft.

### Amiga, More Important Than Ever!

With words such as, "We have to let go of this notion that for Apple to win, Microsoft must lose," Steve Jobs introduced his idea that everyone should just get along. He calmed his audience by stating, "Apple plus Microsoft equals 100% of the Desktop computer market."

Fortunately, this is not true. Under the guidance of one of Microsoft's largest clients, the Amiga is preparing to enter the fray once again with new hardware and software. This should bolster the millions of Amiga enthusiasts world wide and, hopefully, create new users.

Franklin D. Roosevelt once said, "The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today." It is time the Amiga realized that it is still ahead and it continues to have opportunities in the marketplace. Gateway 2000 appears to recognize this and it has placed its muscle behind the development. The world just keeps getting more interesting. I can't wait to see what tomorrow brings.

Sincerely,  
  
Don Hicks  
Managing Editor

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Amazing Computing/AMIGA™

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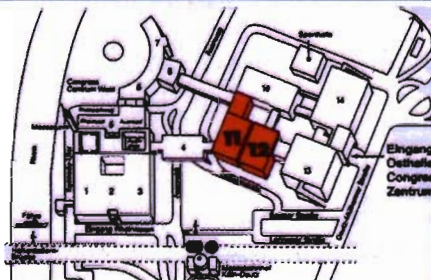
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# FEEDBACK

## "Has the idea ever occurred to anyone that the A500/A600 models could well STILL be sold?"

Dear AC,

I'm writing this tidbit on a PC clone using MS-Word at one of the local libraries. I'm presently computer-less, having sold my CD32/SX-1 combo a couple of months ago, after finding myself unexpectedly unemployed.

When I read that Gateway 2000 had bought Amiga Technologies, leaving it a separate entity, Amiga International, to sink or swim on its own, I went, "Great - a PC clone manufacturer bought out Amiga - probably to bury it. R.I.P." Then I read in a European magazine that Gateway had pulled out of a merger with Compac, and effectively thumbed their noses at the WinTel duopoly.

I wholeheartedly agree with the person who wrote in stating that they need to get Amigas on the shelves at Toys R Us and WalMart. Actually, I envisioned B&W cowhide-painted A1200s along with shelves of software at Best Buy myself. I was elated to see Gateway would be bringing their pricing down a little closer to reality.

I bought the first and only NEW Amiga I've ever owned, an A500 in 1992 for \$399 just before Commodore got

stupid, discontinued that model and started pushing the A600 when the A500 was the bestselling computer they'd ever had (as well as having tons of the things still sitting in warehouses). I bought it because it was less than half the cost of a PC clone, probably 1/5th the price of the yuppie Macintosh.

Five years ago, a die-hard Mac friend of mine couldn't stand that my Amiga 500 ran circles around his Mac as far as graphics animation, multitasking, and software availability. All he could say was, "I hate Amigas - they're cheap."

That's the point! They do everything the other platforms do, and you can get by hooked-up to a TV set running nothing but a floppy disk drive! With the A1200HD model, and a little extra memory, there's nothing you can't do.

Apple, who had 5% of the PC sales in 1996 has lost \$1.6 billion in the last four quarters, almost as much as Gateway 2000 had in total sales in that time - what percentage of the PC market can Amiga claim to have? Gateway needs to quit preaching to the converted, and get the costs down.

Has the idea ever occurred to anyone that the A500/A600 models could well STILL be sold - maybe at Toys R Us, KMart, Best Buy, etc., for a measly what? \$100? Maybe \$150 with a small hard drive installed. All the software imaginable would run. Brilliance, FinalCalc/Copy/Data/Writer, IBrowse, ImageFX, Pagesetter, etc. Granted - the 4096 color palette might at first seem a step backward - but the fact that most PC desktops are only using 256 colors (ala Workbench 3.1) anyway, 16 million colors doesn't matter much. Insuring every A600 leaves the factory with say, 4Mb RAM, 80Mb HD and a 3.1 ROM should leave it fully compatible with today's Amiga software, yet still be about half the price of an A1200HD model that does the

same thing! For little more than the price of today's game consoles! They might just sell a million of the things (ala Commodore 64)!

As for my selling my A1200 clone, I'm not concerned. I've sold many Amiga models in the past few years since Commodore went bankrupt, trying to keep the machine alive in my own way. I'd wager at least HALF the Amigas in the local classifieds were MINE. In the past year or so, I know there have only been a couple of Amigas in the paper besides those I've had for sale.

Most recently, I placed an ad: BUYING Amigas... just to see if there would be any bites (I've found more \$5 and \$10 A500s at the local Goodwill than I've seen ANY Amiga models for sale in the newspaper in the past year.) I've got a list of locals wanting to sell practically every model: A1000 (2), A500, A2000, A600, A3000, A1200 (2), ranging in price from \$50 (A500) to \$300 (A3000) max. Now all I have to do is obtain employment...

Sincerely,  
George Fisher  
Mishawaka IN

*An A500 would still require parts and assembly. Considering any new research and development changes that might improve the efficiency of design would also need to be factored into the price and I do not believe we could get the price down to the levels you mentioned. However a retro Amiga movement is not a bad idea.*

*By the way, while the Amiga 500 was possibly the best selling Amiga, the C64 was the best selling computer. Oh, what Commodore let slip through their fingers.*

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# Gateway 2000 fights off Amiga rights encroachment, Paxtron & Software Hut expand their distribution, Haage & Partner create more Amiga power tools, and more.

# NEW PRODUCTS

*and other neat stuff*

## Amiga International News

The following information was received from Amiga International in a press release dated July 31, 1997. Amiga International has established a licensing agreement with Vidamus Multymedia from Sweden. They have also settled agreements for distribution of the Amiga OS 3.1 with Vesalis of Germany, MicroniK of Germany, Power Computing of the UK, and Software Hut in the U.S.

## Gateway 2000 Maintains Amiga Rights

Gateway 2000 issued a release concerning a Chinese company's statement that they own all the license rights to the Amiga. Gateway states, "As owner of all Amiga, Inc. patent rights worldwide, we at Gateway 2000 want to clarify a recent story on the apparent sale of all Amiga patents, trademarks and copyrights by Rightiming Electronics to Lotus Pacific, Inc. for use in China, Taiwan, Macao and the bordering countries between China and the former Soviet Union. Rightiming purports to hold a license to manufacture Amigas and has apparently attempted to sell this purported license to Lotus Pacific. We dispute their license, their right to sell any license, and we dispute any claims they have made with respect to



The LensFlares effect from  
Power Effects 2 by  
Haage&Partner



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## PowerEffects 2 and PowerUP Effects

Following the recent debut of ArtEffect 2 in June, Haage & Partner have now introduced two new special effects packages to extend its power. PowerEffects 2 offers nine new effects: FishEye, Patchwork, FalseColor, Pointize, HalfTone, Crystalize, Lightning, and LensFlares.

The new PowerUP Effects package offers a great performance boost for users of PowerUP boards by Phase5. The speed of the PowerUP Effect is mainly based on the PowerPC native version of the plugin.library that handles almost all actions of the plug-ins. So not only the filters of this package will be faster, there is also an increase in speed of every effect, because they all will now use the new PPC plugin.library. Besides this, there

are special native versions of the major effects. The PowerUP Effects are 2 to 20 times faster than the normal ones. The PowerUP Effects are the first application that makes use of the enormous power of the PowerUP board of Phase 5.

Haage & Partner is also the developer and/or distributor of several applications for the Amiga including: ArtEffect, PowerEffects, EasyWriter, DrawStudio, Tornado3D and NetConnect. They have also promised MERAPI, a JAVA interpreter for the Amiga.

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## Paxtron New Distributor

As many people know, the first license granted from Amiga International was given to MicroniK Computer Services in Germany. Paxtron Corporation is pleased to announce that they have been appointed as

*The press releases and news announcements in New Products are from Amiga vendors and others. While Amazing Computing maintains the right to edit these articles, the statements, etc. made in these reports are those of the vendors and not Amazing Computing.*



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1. Above pricing is for repair of basic Amiga PC Boards only and does not include floppies or hard drives.
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MicroniK's first U.S. distributor. In this role they will be selling MicroniK's *infinitv* Tower Systems to dealers and end users. For more information please see their ad/web page.

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### Software Hut, Inc.

Software Hut, Inc. has announced that they have been appointed as an official distributor for OS 3.1. They are also listed on Amiga International's web page as an Authorized Distributor for all their products including computers etc. The AMIGA OS 3.1 is owned by AMIGA International, Inc./Gateway 2000 and protected by copyright laws, international treaty provision and all other applicable national laws. The distribution of the AMIGA OS 3.1 is only approved by

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Software Hut, Inc., 313 Henderson Drive, Sharon Hill, PA 19079, Orders call: 800-932-6442, Info: 610-586-5703, Tech: 610-586-8640, Fax: 610-586-5706/6416, email: [softhut@ix.netcom.com](mailto:softhut@ix.netcom.com), Web site: [www.softhut.com](http://www.softhut.com)

### Power Solutions

Power Solutions has acquired North American distribution rights for the Melody sound card from KATO. The first shipment was due to arrive in mid-August. Special introductory pricing of \$275 Canadian will be in effect until October 1, 1997. Power Solutions is a new, Amiga only, Canadian company. Melody is a 16-bit sound card driven by a special DSP. Melody has native AHI support. Further details can be accessed at <http://home.pages.de/~kato>  
Power Solutions, Suite 255, Richmond

West Plaza, 35-2855 Pembina Hwy, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3T 2H5, Tel/Fax: 204-453-0527, email: [infor@powersolutions.mb.ca](mailto:infor@powersolutions.mb.ca) or web site: [www.powersolutions.mb.ca](http://www.powersolutions.mb.ca)

### Geek Gadgets Vol. 2

CRONUS and Fred Fish have announced the release of Geek Gadgets Vol. 2. This CD-ROM contains the Amiga Developers' Environment (ADE), a project organized by Cronus to produce and support Amiga ports of dozens of the most popular development tools and utilities from the Free Software Foundation, BSD and other sources. The CD contains all the tools you need to get started programming on the Amiga, including advanced C, C++, Fortran and ADA compilers, assembler, linker, EMACs editor, "make", source code control systems, text and file utilities, GNU debugger, text formatters and more. Geek Gadgets also includes a developer version of



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## infinitiv Towers-

The infinitiv 1300 Towers basic systems include: 2MB Chip Ram, OMB Fast Ram, OMB HardDisk, 880KB floppy, 150watt PS, keyboard, 3.1 OS & Manuals

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A1300 200MHZ 603e (280 MIPS*) & 50MHZ-060 WITH MMU & FPU (39 MIPS*) +SCSI-2	\$1865

## The infinitiv 1400 Towers systems add to the infinitiv 1300:

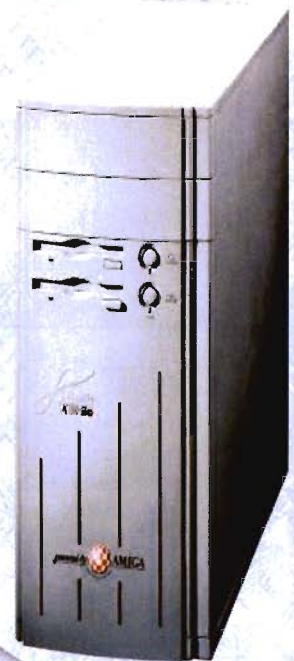
5 Zorro-II Slots, Pass-Through Expansion-Slot, Optional Video Slot	
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A1400 50MHZ-060 WITH MMU & FPU (39 MIPS*)	\$1525
A1400 175MHZ 603e (250 MIPS*) & 50MHZ-030 WITH MMU (10 MIPS*) +SCSI-2	\$1535
A1400 200MHZ 603e (280 MIPS*) & 40MHZ-040 WITH MMU & FPU (30 MIPS*) +SCSI-2	\$1765
A1400 200MHZ 603e (280 MIPS*) & 50MHZ-060 WITH MMU & FPU (39 MIPS*) +SCSI-2	\$2065

## The infinitiv 1500 Towers systems add to the infinitiv 1300:

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A1500 150MHZ 604e (n/a MIPS*) & 40MHZ-040 WITH MMU & FPU (30 MIPS*) +SCSI-3	\$2215
A1500 150MHZ 604e (n/a MIPS*) & 50MHZ-060 WITH MMU & FPU (39 MIPS*) +SCSI-3	\$2525
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### Aminet Set 5

Aminet Set 5, produced by Stefan Ossowski's Schatztruhe will be available in the U.S. from CRONUS. Aminet Set 5 offers Amiga users everything since the release of Aminet Set 4, plus the latest and unrestricted version of Octamed Sound Studio. Aminet Set 5 also features nearly 1 GB of data which will NOT appear on the regular Aminet CD-ROM series. Dated June 1997, the set consists of approximately 4 gigabytes of software in 7400 archives. Tons of stuff for only \$ 35.95 (plus S&H).

### Amy Resources-US Edition, Vol.1

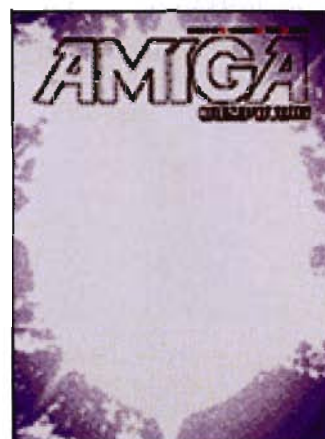
CRONUS also announced their exclusive US distribution for the Amy Resources-US Edition, Vol.1 CD-ROM. Amy Resources is a comprehensive collection of software for the Amiga

range of personal computers. Top quality shareware, selected collections of graphics demos, mods and a complete suite of registered packages are installed and ready to run. It features full registered versions of Amiga E3.21, ProGED2.4, ImageStudio2.3, plus many more! SRP \$24.95

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## Amiga Computing's Final Issue.

In a short statement on their web site, the British Amiga magazine, *Amiga Computing*, announced their last issue. "Closed August 5th 1997. *Amiga Computing* has now ceased publication, Issue 117 - October 1997 was the final issue produced. A big thank you to everyone that has worked, read and supported *Amiga Computing* over the years. Buy the final ever issue on August 21st, it's a collectors item."

*Amiga Computing's* parent company, IDG Media, chose *Amiga Computing* to fulfill the remainder of subscriptions from IDG's US Amiga magazine, *AmigaWorld*, when it closed in March of 1995. Subscribers were racked with non-delivery problems and errors in their subscriptions as the British publication tried to create an American subscription-only publication. US advertisers were also upset with late issues and lost revenue.

No word was available at press time as to how surviving subscribers would have their subscriptions fulfilled. A message on the Staff page stated, "you're a slave to money, and then you die."

The last phone numbers available for *Amiga Computing* are Tel: +44 (0)1625 878888 and Fax: +44 (0)1625 879966.

•AC•

# AMIGA Inc.?

## Gateway 2000 continues their push into the Amiga market with a new US company.

As Amazing Computing is going to press, we have discovered activity from Gateway 2000 and AMIGA International that has not been officially explained. In a release on AMIGA International's web site ([www.amiga.de](http://www.amiga.de)) the following notice was posted:

### First meeting in USA with representatives of the AMIGA community

August 11th, 1997, Dakota Dunes, USA - First official meeting in Dakota Dunes/USA under direction of Jeff Schindler, General Manager AMIGA, Inc. (Technology and Licensing Company) and Petro Tyschtschenko, Managing Director AMIGA International, Inc. (International Sales & Marketing) with competent representatives of the AMIGA community. We came together with:

- Dean Brown, Boardmember ICOA\*
- Jason Compton, AMIGA reporter
- Andy Finkel, Boardmember ICOA\*
- Darreck Lisle, Siouxland Metro User Group
- Jesse McClusky, Boardmember ICOA\*
- Fleecy Moss, Project Manager ICOA\*, Member JMS\*\*
- Alain Penders, Boardmember ICOA\*
- Joe Torre, AMIGA Atlanta User Group

to better understand the AMIGA community and its concerns. In three days we discussed history and possible strategies for the future of our AMIGA. Petro Tyschtschenko, Managing Director AMIGA International, Inc.

\* Industry Council Open AMIGA Initiative

\*\* Jay Miner Society

In an interview with AC, Petro Tyschtschenko (please see the interview with Petro Tyschtschenko on page 48 of this issue), acknowledged that the event took place and that a separate company, AMIGA Inc., was being formed.

While an official announcement on this new company was not available at press time, information on the new head of AMIGA Inc. was provided by a reliable source at Gateway 2000. Jeff Schindler, according to our sources was an original Vic 20 owner who later upgraded to a C64. He has

had several years experience in the home computer market in the '80s in retail positions. Later he worked in the Research and Development department of a large, unnamed computer manufacturer before he came to Gateway 2000. Since his arrival at Gateway 2000, he has held several positions with the latest being the inventor of Gateway 2000 Destination TV.

All of our sources were in agreement that the new company, AMIGA Inc., which will be positioned in the US, and AMIGA International will work together as a team. They also assured AC that the addition of AMIGA Inc. was a firm example of the continued commitment Gateway 2000 was making to the AMIGA market.

Amazing Computing will continue to follow this breaking story. Please see next month's issue as well as our web site at [www.pimpub.com](http://www.pimpub.com) for additional information.

•AC•



Jeff Schindler's, AMIGA Inc.'s General Manager, last invention for Gateway 2000 was their new Destination TV.



# Aladdin 4D version 5.0

**Nova Design has revamped a prestigious 3D program and released it to the public.  
Is the new version worthy of the title?**

*by R. Shamms Mortier*

After over a year in development and retooling, Aladdin 4D version 5 rejoins the Amiga family of 3D art and animation applications. Greg Gorby's ground-breaking Amiga software is back on the shelves, and loaded for the challenges ahead. Aladdin 4D, reshaped by Nova Design, sports a whole new look. There were two areas of user feedback concerns that Aladdin 4D 5.0 now answers: the removal of dongelized protection, and a more industry standard interface design. As to the first, though piracy issues are always a concern of developers, Nova Design has acted to removed the hated dogle from the software. This will mean much less of a hassle when it comes to installing Aladdin 4D, and also eliminates the possibility of removing a dogle when the Amiga is powered which can cause serious electric damage to your system. As for

the redesigned interface, that needs to be detailed carefully.

## The Redesigned Aladdin 4D Interface

Nova Design, known for its steadfastness in supporting the Amiga with the superlative ImageFX, has taken its time to reshape Aladdin's interface. In most cases, the new look does not interfere with the Aladdin learning curve already understood by experienced Aladdin users, though a few changes will call for some dedicated study and revised thinking.

The biggest and most immediate thing you will notice about the new interface design is the clarity and accessibility of the tools. Requesters are separated by tabbed compartments, allowing you easy entrance into the basics, and a separate area for high end customization. This is very

important when it comes to items like Fountains and Gases, which are infinitely customizable when you need to explore original and unique applications for them. This makes Aladdin a perfect environment for new users, while at the same time honoring the creative energy and intent of experienced Aladdin 3D/4D artists and animators.

## New Features

The new features that most Aladdin 5 users will flip over are its seamless communication with LightWave object importation, and the ability to fold in ImageFX. Opening up LightWave object files is a thrill, allowing you to import, reshape, and animate the thousands of LightWave objects available on the Net, from redistribution CDs, and from LightWave itself.

Added to this, the new motion blur features and visible light cone attributes push Aladdin even farther towards the peak of the mountain. No one is making any commitments yet, but Greg Gorby (Aladdin's original programmer) may be convinced to write other plugins for Aladdin in the future. Certainly this writer wishes he would, since Greg is an absolute master at 3D coding, and one of the most original programmers around to boot.

## A Commitment to Continued Upgrading

If there is one thing that the folks at Nova want you to know from the get go, it's how absolutely committed they are to a continual involvement with Aladdin 4D. As time goes by, it will gain even more capabilities, and your user feedback is an important part of that process. This is especially

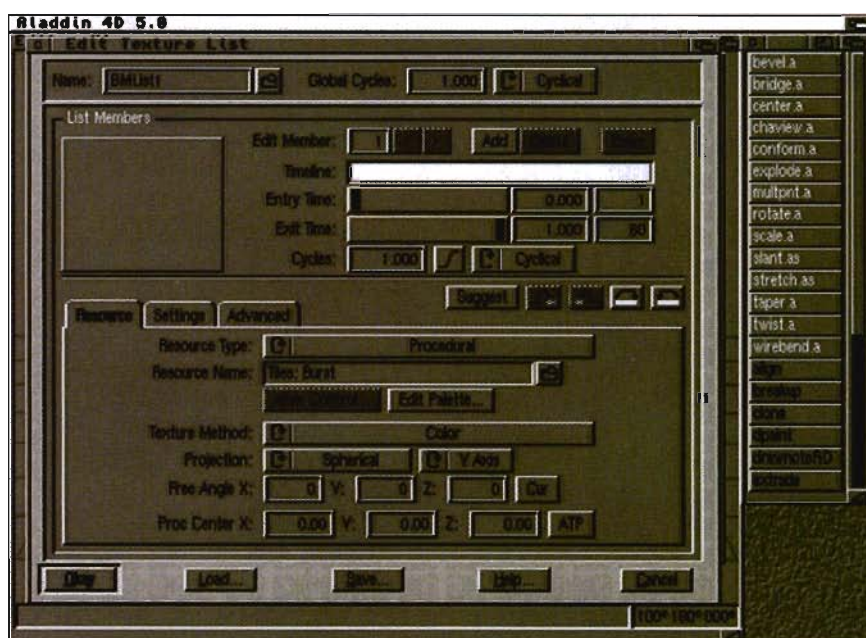


Figure 1. A peek at the new texture requester, sharp, clean, and ready for your input.



true for experienced Aladdin users who will be able to see where 5.0 is compared to earlier versions. Keep that in mind when you open the 5.0 package, and get a chance to explore the contents.

### A Request for Other Features

The first thing that I would like to ask Nova to do is to put a large and clearly named UNDO box at the top or side of the interface. This will make the UNDO operation much more standard and available to new Aladdin users. Next, although the LightWave connection is absolutely flawless as I have experienced it, I would urge Nova to include the ability to import and export Aladdin models as DXF formats. This opens the door even wider to handshaking with other 3D applications, coming and going. Because of its inability to accept parametric (intrinsic) texture mapping, DXF is looked at as a poor alternative when it comes to exchanging model data between and amongst different applications. However, it is still the most widely used common 3D model format around. It should have a presence in Aladdin 4D as well.

Next, as far as 3D format conventions, Aladdin 4D should be able to write as well as to read LightWave object and scene files. Even though it may be impossible to translate Aladdin's extensive texture mapping capabilities to LightWave, some users are going to prefer to use the LightWave animation system, due to their familiarity with it if nothing else. Aladdin 4D also needs to talk keyframes in addition to deformation path editing. By the way, on the advice of the esteemed Kermit Woodall of Nova Design, if you are having trouble bringing up the AmigaGuide help screens, you may want to investigate purchasing a copy of AmigaGuide version 3.1.

Of course, I've already mentioned my biggest wish, that of inviting Greg Gorby to author a few fun plugins for inclusion in his baby. Greg also gave me permission to tell you what he thinks about 5.0, now that it's being parented by Nova. In a short phrase, he's "thrilled with everything". This is a sign of deep respect for Nova Design and good news for the community of Aladdin users, since it's the most supportive remark possible from Aladdin's original creator.

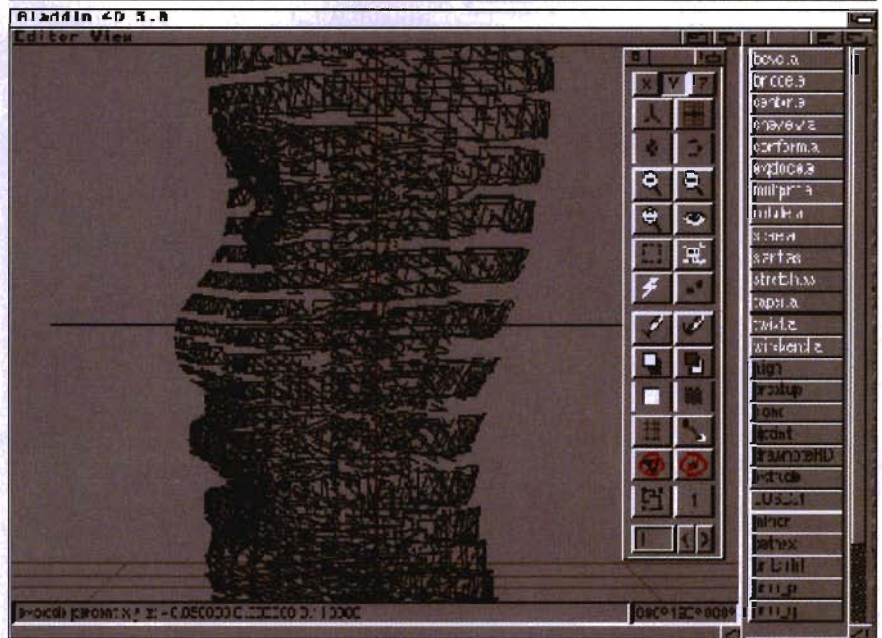
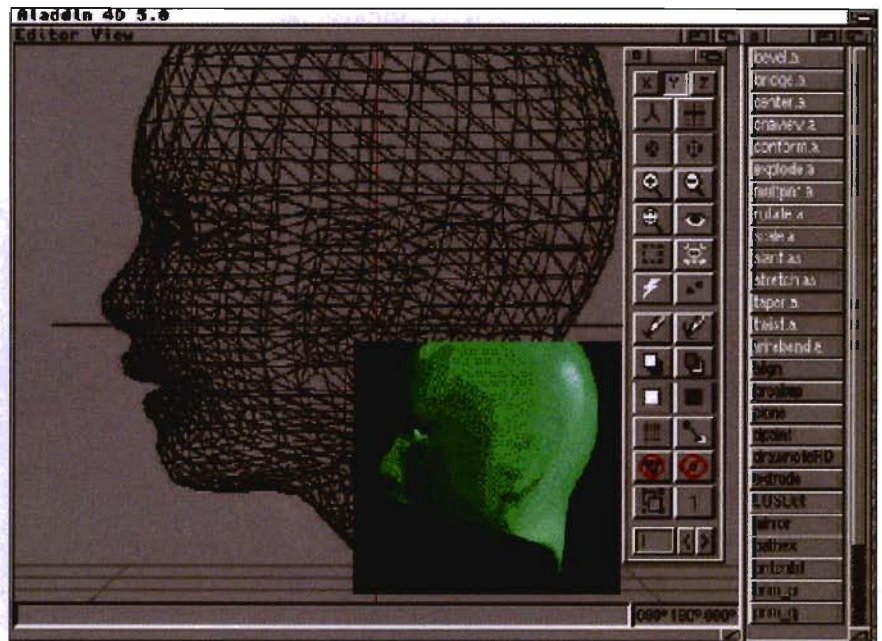


Figure 2 (Top). An imported head from the Humanoid collection in the LightWave object format looks perfect in Aladdin 4D version 5.

Figure 3 (Middle). The same head displayed in figure 2 is compressed and exploded in Aladdin 4D.

Figure 4 (Bottom). In Aladdin 4D, you can apply procedural or bitmap textures to any object.



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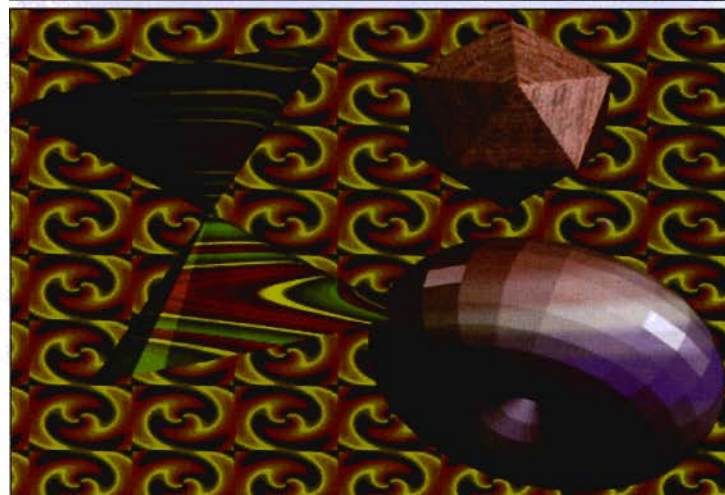
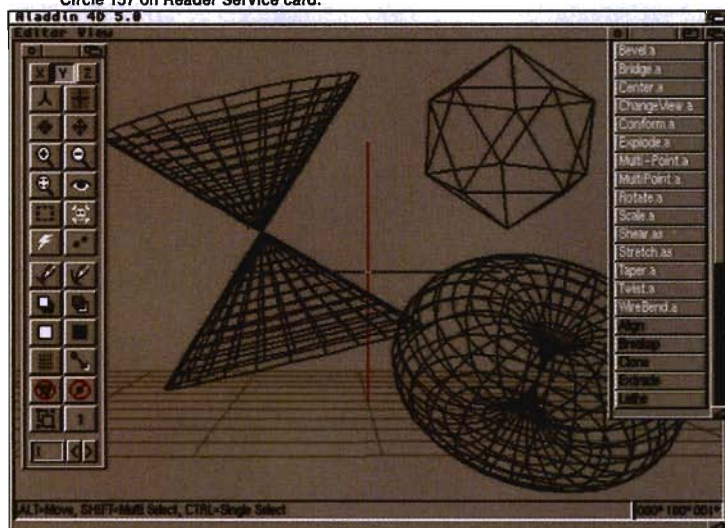


Figure 5 (Top). Aladdin 4D offers you both Platonic and Quadratic primitive object creation.

Figure 6 (Bottom). Aladdin 4D procedural textures applied to Platonic and Quadratic objects, as well as to the background. Procedurals take almost no disk space, and look awesome when animated.

## Conclusions

Something I discovered is that the installation script seems to use older A4D settings in the user-startup configuration. When I went through and commented these out, Aladdin couldn't find the external tools. Check your startup sequence carefully and make sure it reads correctly, perhaps editing it, for the placement of Aladdin and its necessary parts.

Aladdin maintains an open architecture. I'm sure Nova would like to speak with anyone with an interest in writing plugins for Aladdin 4D.

I have compared Aladdin 4D with some of the top 3D applications on the market. As it was two years ago, so it is today. Aladdin 4D remains, even if secretly to many computer artists and animators, one of the top 3D and 4D applications around. What it can do on an Amiga

'040 system in many ways beats what very high priced 3D software on other super-speed platforms can even approach. The speed of Aladdin 4D's rendering, the Fountains and Gases modules, and its capability for customization are still at the head of the class.

Its new parent, Nova Design, is an added plus, because of their steadfast and dedicated involvement with the best in Amiga computing, through the dark times and the light. If you are an Amiga user who professionally (or just for fun) works with 3D art and animation software, and you don't own or plan to own Aladdin 4D version 5, your work and play on the Amiga will be at a loss. This was great software when it was initially developed by Greg Gorby, and is even better with this newest release.

I will continue the Aladdin 4D tutorials which appeared in *Amazing Computing/Amiga*. The next one will be on Aladdin 4D Procedural Textures with more to follow. Do not walk or run to purchase an upgrade to version 5.0, but take a faster than light starship to get it at your first opportunity. The Amiga community also owes a vote of creative and mercantile thanks to the Nova Design team—Bob Fisher, Kermit Woodall, and Tom Krehbiel (plus Jay Gross and Harv Laser for the new manual). They continued a great Amiga product for the future: Aladdin 4D version 5.

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COD





# Memory Power UP!

## DKB's 3128 and 2632 Memory Boards Let Amiga Owners Take Advantage of Lower RAM Prices.

by Nick Cook

Amiga owners don't have to add memory just to get acceptable system performance, as many PC owners must do. Just eight megs was all that seemed to be needed for any normal business.

Well, of course it isn't. For memory intensive projects such as 3D rendering, image processing and multi-tasking, you could never have too much RAM. When memory prices dropped like a rock last year, heck, even if you didn't need additional memory, it certainly didn't hurt to stuff some more in there.

Enter two products from long-time Amiga developer DKB. The 3128 and 2632 memory boards not only give a user the way to take advantage of lower SIMM prices, but also break the maximum RAM on the A2000, A3000, and A4000 systems.

These boards are not to be confused with the AmiFast 3000 offered by ProvTech and featured in the March issue of *Amazing Computing/Amiga*. ProvTech's board was for the A3000 only and allowed Amiga 3000 users to expand their systems to 16MB.

### Ditch The Zips

The A3000 can take 18 megabytes of RAM on the motherboard. Alas, it uses ZIP chips. While space-saving, they were expensive and are no longer manufactured. Perhaps worse, the ZIPs sit under the A3000's equipment platform. The Amiga has to be completely disassembled to add memory, not a particularly fun way to spend an afternoon.

The DKB 3128 is a full-sized Zorro III expansion board (A4000 owners need to check the motherboard; it has to be revision 3.1 or higher). It can accept 4 MB, 8 MB, 16 MB or 32 MB SIMMs. These modules can be mixed or matched. The 3128 memory expansion board offers several advantages:

- it uses industry standard SIMMs,
- it is easy to install, and
- it allows 146 megabytes of memory on an A3000 and A4000.

Installing the SIMMs on the board is a cinch: slip the module down the plastic guides and gently push back. If any of the SIMMs are larger than 4 megs, jumpers on the board have to be

set. The settings are covered in the slim but comprehensive manual. These jumpers are the most annoying part of the whole process. They are the typical itty-bitty shorting blocks, always a test of finger dexterity.

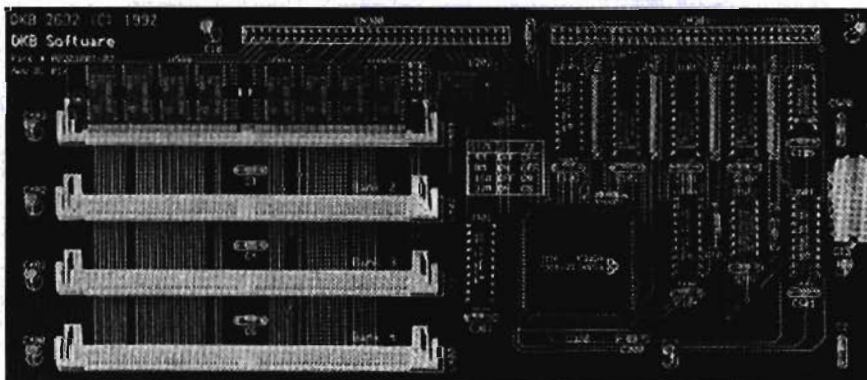
Once the SIMMs are in place, remove the computer's cover and slide the card into a vacant slot. The final step is installing the DKB 3128 program on the enclosed disk. You'll need this if the SIMMs are differently sized (if you don't, the Amiga will assume that all the SIMMs are the size of the largest one and add non-existent memory, not a particularly good idea). Although the standard Install program isn't used, the one provided on the disk does the job. The 3128 program adds all the memory it finds in the system, including any leftover ZIPs present.

That's all! The entire process is simple, although I had to set an additional jumper on the A3000 motherboard, which wasn't documented in the manual. My A3000 now hums with nearly 80 megs of RAM, letting me turn off slow virtual memory for programs such as ImageMaster R/T and PageStream.

### Beyond The Eight Megs

The DKB 2632 board is for the A2630 accelerator card. The board adds up to 112 megabytes of 32-wide memory, a hefty increase over the A2630's 8 megabyte limit.

The SIMMs slip into plastic guides, just as the 3128 board. Once the modules are in the slot, gently push them back.



The DKB 2632 fits on the expansion slot of the A2630 board.

The board itself fits onto the expansion connectors on the back of the A2630. The bad news is that the memory board overhangs the expansion slot next to the CPU slot; any cards (usually the hard drive card) in that next-door location will have to be moved. The 2632 also needs to be connected to the Amiga's power supply. The whole process is slightly more difficult than simply slipping in a card, about on the par with installing a hard drive.

Once the hardware is in place, a memory management program is the next step. That's just a matter of sticking the disk in the drive and double-clicking on the appropriate icon.

A problem arose on my A2000. At the time, it was stuffed with a Bridge-board, Picasso board, two hard drives and two floppy drives. On bootup, I lost one hard drive with the 2632 memory added. Any attempt to access the programs on the drive caused spectacular crashes. This behavior wasn't mentioned in the troubleshooting section of the manual. A call to DKB's Technical Support number quickly pinpointed the problem: the A2000's power supply was maxed out. When my A3000 was resurrected, some of the goodies were swapped out of the A2000. I've had no recurrence of the power supply problems with the A2000's current setup: two floppies, a one gig hard drive and two speed CD drive.

Both boards come with slim manuals describing the installation in clear, step-by-step manner. With the low RAM prices, investing in either DKB board is a good way to upgrade your Amiga.

DKB 3128  
DKB 2632  
DKB Software  
29318 Lorie Lane  
Wixom, MI 48393  
(810) 348-3821

•AC•

## What's That In English?

In anthropology class, you may have learned that language can function a boundary marker between two groups. This seems to be true between computer techies and mere mortals. While you may be able to buy memory clearly marked in megabytes (e.g., "32 megs"), sometimes you'll be faced with labels which seem counter-intuitive. Here's a glossary:

1MB X 32 SIMM Modules	4 megs
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# Tune in the ALPHA CHANNEL

## Creative Edges for Photographs

by Nick Cook

You've probably noticed photographs in advertisements and articles which don't have straight edges. The edges may be blurred or ragged (in an appropriately artistic manner, of course) into the background page. These effects are courtesy of an Adobe program called "Auto F/X." As you might expect, it's not available on the Amiga. Not to worry. We can reproduce many of the same effects with our paint and image processing programs.

The fancy edges are created by compositing the photograph through the alpha channel. The alpha channel

is a grayscale image that controls the transparency of the composited image. In other words, it acts like a "strainer," allowing different parts of the image to be visible or not (Figure 1). The white in the alpha channel lets all of the image colors through while black blocks them. Shades of gray let various colors pass. By drawing different grayscale images as external alpha channels, we can create some fascinating edges for photographs.

We'll explore the alpha channel using several Amiga paint and image processing programs. Even though

some programs may not use the term "alpha channel," the compose controls duplicate the function.

### Fuzzy Wuzzy...

One of the most popular edge effects is a blur (Figure 2), where the fuzzy edge of the photograph blends into the page. This gives an overall nostalgic or wistful feel to the image. We'll fire up ImageMaster R/T for our blurring:

1. Load your photograph.
2. Create a new buffer for the alpha channel. This involves the infamous ImageMaster Interface Polka. Click on Buffers>New Buffer>Custom>Initialize To Color (call the buffer to something like "Alpha"), then Done. When the red-green-blue (RGB) sliders appear, move them all the way to the left for black. After clicking Done, you will be asked what to do with the new buffer. For now, select New As Primary. Ah, woneful, woneful!
3. Get back to the main interface. Select Paint, then Set Colors. Choose Adjust Foreground Color and move the RGB sliders all the way to the right for white. Accept the color.
4. Activate the icon for the rectangle tool, then choose Area Fill. Draw a filled rectangle somewhat smaller than the photograph.
5. Move to the Process tools interface. Select Blur from the



Figure 1: Compositing the original picture (upper left) through the Alpha Channel graphic (middle) results in the image seen in the lower right.





**Figure 2:** Our model, the lovely and eccentric La Bamba Kitty. (Photo by author).

Filters panel, and run the effect on the rectangle's edges. The amount of resulting fuzziness depends on the number entered in the Blur's preferences gadget. A setting of 10 was used for Figure 2.

6. Hand me that accordion, its time for another buffer polka! Time to create the page to hold the composited image. Click on Buffers>New Buffer>Custom>Initialize To Color (you may want to rename this buffer to something like "Page"), then Done. When the RGB sliders appear, move them all the way to the right for white. After clicking Done, you will be asked what to do with the new buffer. For now, select New As Primary (don't worry, this won't do anything nasty to the other buffers).
7. While in the Buffer interface, make sure that the three buffers are in their right slots: The white "Page" buffer should be Primary, the original photograph should be Secondary, and the "Alpha" buffer should be Blend. Use the various Select buttons to shift the buffers around as needed.
8. Wade into the Compose interface: Compose>Controls>Set Blend>Other Options. Click on Use Blend Ctrl Buffer, then three sequential Dones to accept.
9. Choose Linear Compose, Rub-Thru. When the cross-hairs appear, drag the box out to select the entire image. When the effect is completed, save the Primary Buffer to disk.

---

**The fancy edges are created by compositing the photograph through the alpha channel.**

---

### To The Ragged Edge

The rough edges of Figure 3 was created in Photogenics. Here's how:

1. Import the photograph. Make it the Secondary Image by using the picture bar, menu or key commands.
2. Create a new black page from the Projects>New menu. The new window will be the same size as the photograph. Move this to the Alpha Channel slot by using the picture bar, menu or key commands.
3. Select white from the palette, then double click on the polygon tool for a filled shape. Draw the filled polygon somewhat smaller than the complete frame will be. Now we go for the edges...
4. Select the brush tool and whatever brush suits



**Figure 3:** A 19th century one room schoolhouse located at the Landis Valley Museum in Pennsylvania. (Photo by author)



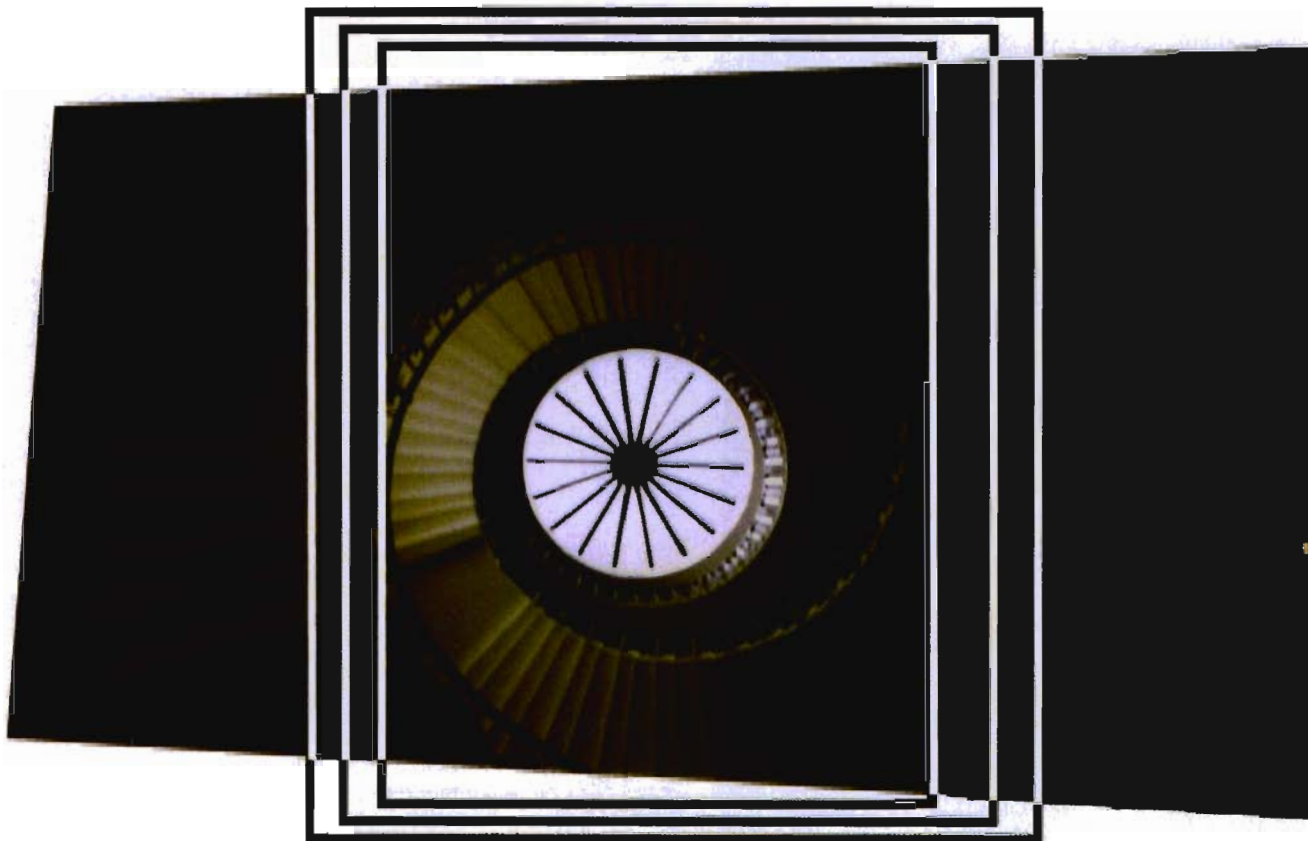


Figure 4: Climb up this spiral staircase at the Queen's House, Greenwich, England to visit the Royal Chambers. (Photo by author)

your fancy. In Figure 3, the ChalkPastel brush was used. Set the Size to 60 and the Pressure to 60 (you may want to experiment with these settings).

5. Activate the straight line tool. Draw lines along each side of the polygon. Keep the lines fairly close to the polygon's edges; that is, make sure the "rubber band"

(seen when dragging the mouse) is right next to the polygon. Keeping these first lines tight smooths the transition between the polygon's hard edge and the brush edge.

6. Go back to the brush tool and change the pressure to 30. Draw another set of lines next to the lines drawn in Step 6. You don't have to be so careful about placement. This set can overlap the existing ones, or not, whatever the artist in you wants. When you are satisfied, straighten your beret and click the Fix icon.
7. Create a new white page from the Projects>New menu. The new page will be the same size as the photograph. With this image active, select the Image>Compose menu item. Photogenics defaults to Alpha Channel composing, so you should see your original photograph appear with the ragged edges you made in the previous steps. Click OK to make it final. Save it to disk.

### Artistically Speaking

You can whip up more elaborate frames using the alpha channel images with a combination of DeluxePaint V and AdPro (Figure 4):

1. Draw your alpha image in DeluxePaint. AdPro works with 24-bit images, so select the "24-Bit Backing" option in DPaint's screen selection window. Remember as you paint: black blocks the image, and white lets the image come through.
2. Launch AdPro. To make sure your original image, background and alpha channel image all match up, they should be the same size. You may want to import your alpha channel image at this point and use AdPro's Scale function to tweak its size. Be sure to clear AdPro's memory buffers or set the mode to Replacement before going on to the next step.
3. Time to create the background using AdPro's handy Backdrop Loader. Hit "L" or use the menu item to open the Loader list. Select Backdrop. Set the Mode cycle gadget to Fill, move the

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Figure 5: The field just fades away.

sliders to the right for white, and enter Width and Height values. Hit OK.

4. After AdPro creates the back-drop, change from Replacement to Compose Mode. Load the alpha image, and the Compose panel will appear. Select As Alpha from the bottom row of buttons.
5. Load the original photograph. The Compose panel will appear again. Change the Alpha: gadget to Alpha Memory, then click on Compose button on the lower left of the panel.

#### A Fast Fade

The last effect we'll look at is a fade away. The image seems to trail off and disappear into the page (Figure 5). Jump back to Photogenics:

1. Load the photograph. Make it the Secondary Image with the picture bar, menu or key commands.
2. Create a new black page from the Projects>New menu. The new image will be the same size as the photograph. Make this the Alpha Channel slot by using the picture bar, menu or key commands.
3. Decide where you want the fade to start. In the example, it begins about four-fifths down the image. Select white from the

palette, then double click on the square tool. Draw a filled rectangle to the point where the fade will start.

4. Select the Window>Transparency Gradient menu item. Set the options requester to Top to Bottom.
5. Use the rectangle tool to draw in the bottom fifth of the alpha channel. With the gradient active, the rectangle will fill with colors ranging from white at the top to black at the bottom.
6. Create a new white page from the Projects>New menu. The new image will be the same size as the photograph. With this image active, select the Image>Compose menu item. Since Photogenics defaults to Alpha Channel composing, you should see your original photograph fade into white toward the bottom of the image. Click OK to make it final and save it.

Even if "Auto F/X" isn't among them, the Amiga has at least a half dozen programs which can duplicate many of the effects. Understand the basic concepts behind alpha channels and plunge into your paint and image processing software. Then sit back, smile and say to yourself, "I can do that!"

•AC•

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# on line

by Rob Hays

amiga telecommunications



This month Rob takes a look at another newsreader, more news on Java for the Amiga, a new browser, a new home for a program previously mentioned here, and a new venture for a long time Amiga guru.

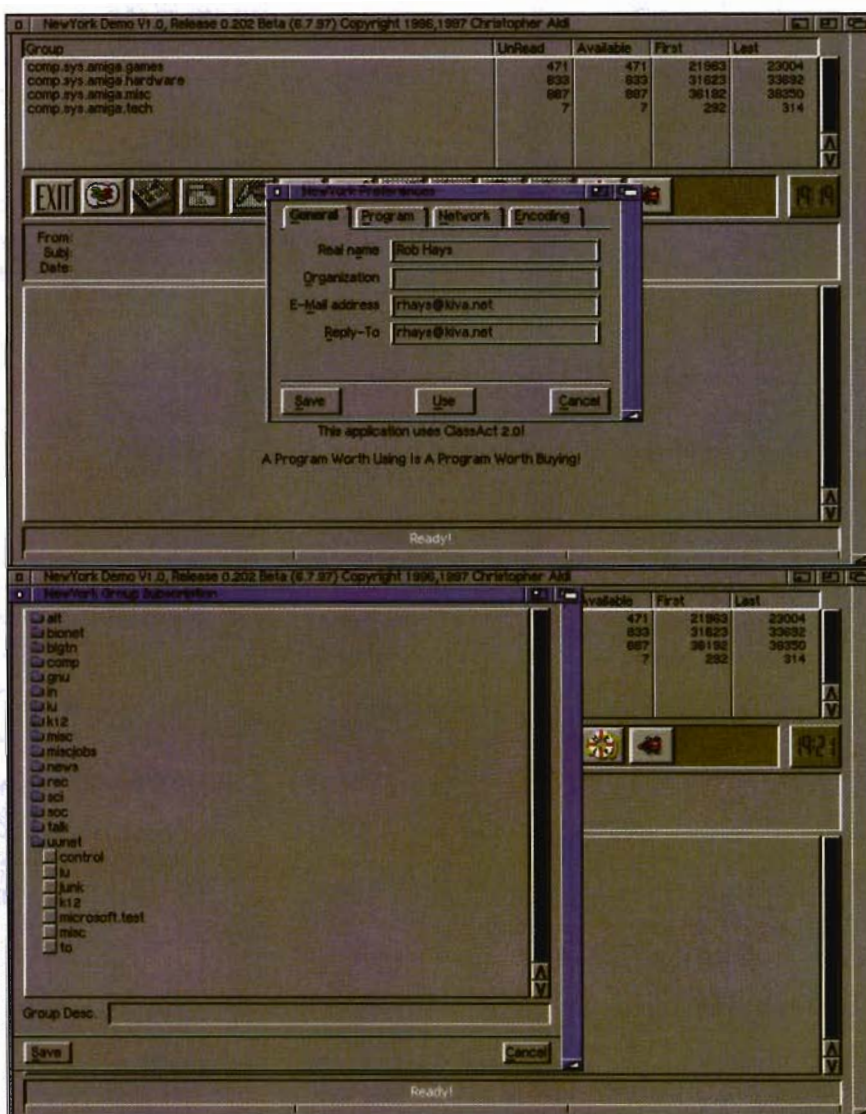


Figure 1 (Top): NewYork's Network Preferences section.  
Figure 2 (Bottom): Begin choosing Newsgroups here.

## NewYork

Written by Christopher E. Aldi, and published by Finale Development, NewYork is still a "work in progress", with some finishing touches still to come. This is not to say it is unusable, or bug-ridden, it just has not had the final polish applied.

Like all programs of this type, the first step is to enter the information for your particular internet provider's newsserver (Figure 1). The next step is to tell the program to get a list of available news groups from your provider. As this list is often in excess of 1 megabyte and contains thousands of newgroups, this step can take several minutes, depending on your network connection speed.

Once this is done, NewYork parses through the file and converts it to its own format, compressing the required disk space to about 200 kilobytes. Now you are presented with a hierarchial display of the newsgroups available for subscription. This listview (Figure 2) is similar to the type provided by Magic User Interface, and those found in the Mac and PC worlds.

Each click on a file folder on the left side of the window will open the next deeper directory level, until individual newsgroups are shown. A click in the empty box next to a name will subscribe you to this group



(Figure 3). Once this is done, NewYork goes to your newsserver and downloads information about the groups you have subscribed to, and displays this in the top part of the main window (Figure 4).

Double-click on a newsgroup name to download a list of message headers for the available messages (Figure 5). A double-click on one of these will fetch the article for you, and display it in the lower section of the screen (Figure 6). As you progress through the messages, a pair of eyes in the "Stat" column on the left side of the upper section, mark the "Read" messages.

NewYork uses the ClassAct GUI system, rather than MUI. Like MUI, ClassAct imparts additional functionality to programs not available through Workbench, like the optional SpeedTips (Figure 7). All of the needed Classes are included in the distribution archive.

NewYork includes an impressive list of features, including built-in UUDecoding of binary messages, ability to interface with external e-mail programs, three ways to sort articles, and an ARexx interface. Also available is a special low-memory configuration if you have as little as two megabytes of RAM.

The full version of NewYork with a retail price of \$35, along with a slightly-crippled demo version is available from the Finale Development Web site (Figure 8) located at: <http://www.finale-dev.com>

The demo is limited to 5 newsgroup subscriptions, no posting to newsgroups, and no batch UUDecodes.

### Web Cruiser

Also available from Finale about the time you read this will be their Finale Web Cruiser. If this lives up to its advanced billing, it will be the first graphical Web Browser available to Amigas running WorkBench 2.1. Other requirements listed are a 68020+ processor, and four megabytes of RAM.

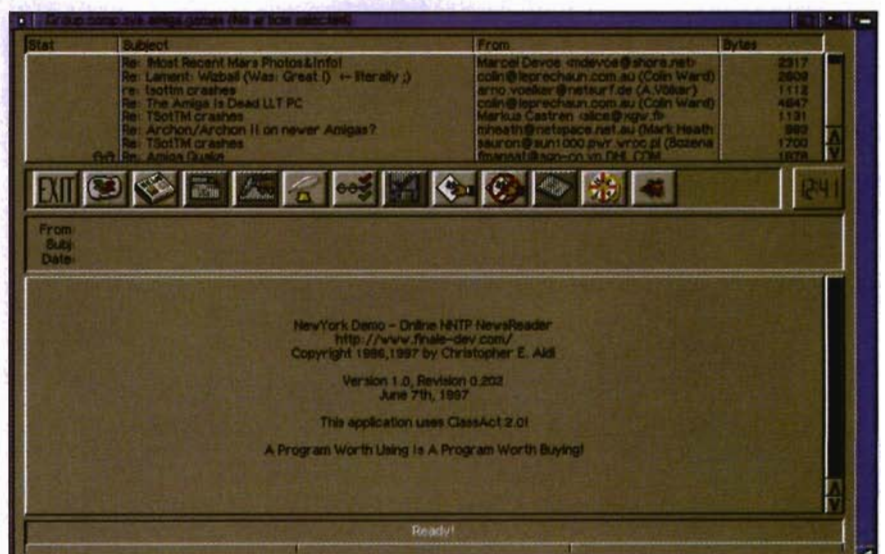
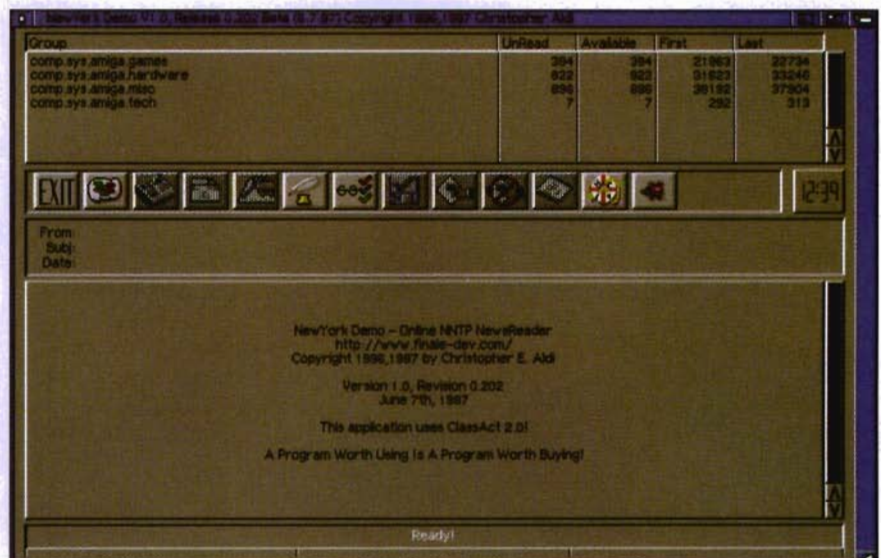
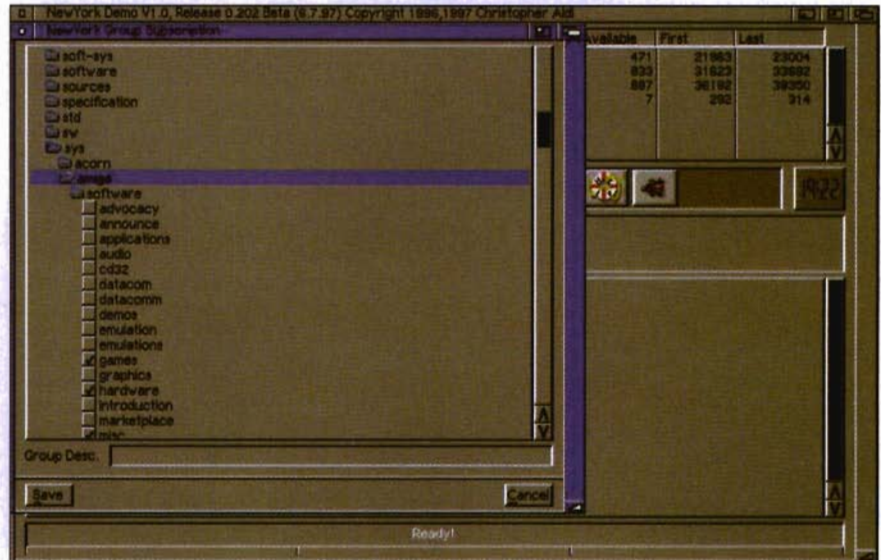


Figure 3 (Top): Finally! The individual articles.

Figure 4 (Middle): All of the stats on all of the groups that count.

Figure 5 (Bottom): Choose your subject.



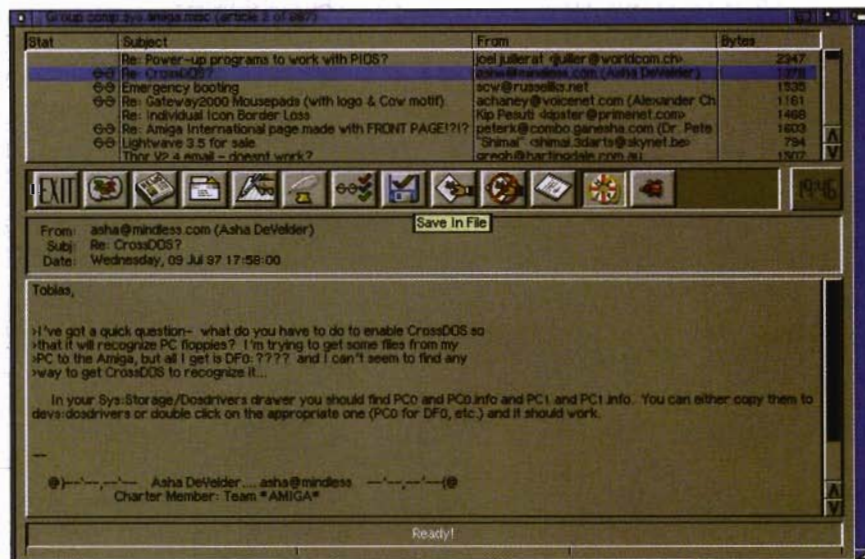


Figure 6 (Top): Reading is a click away.  
 Figure 7 (Middle): Forget what the pretty icons do? Turn on the SpeedTips.  
 Figure 8 (Bottom): Finale Development.

Promised abilities include full HTML 3.2 compliance, as well as the common Netscape extensions (up to Netscape 4.0), and Internet Explorer extensions. Image decoders for GIF, JPG and PNG graphics allow progressive image display of all three types of graphics. Support for Secure Socket Layers (SSL) security features, and support for graphics cards are also among the features.

Also promised to ship with Web Cruiser, is their JSAmi, a JavaScript interpreter. JavaScript is (as the name implies) a scripting language, designed to take the place of many functions currently handled by Perl or C programs running on the network server.

With a retail price of \$45, Web Cruiser should bring graphical browsing to owners of expanded A-500's, and A-2000's, as well as A-3000's that don't have the latest OS and a graphic card.

## MOca

Finale has also been working on an implementation of Java for the Amiga, which will dovetail with their Web Cruiser. Java in reality consists of two parts; the language, much like C/C++, and the Java Virtual Machine. The Java program is compiled by the Java Compiler, which turns it into sort of a Java machine code. This is then executed by the Java Virtual Machine, sort of a virtual CPU.

According to the information on the Finale Web site, the Java machine code (called Byte code) will run on any computer that has a Java Virtual Machine (JVM). Because the JVM is a software emulation of hardware, the programs tend to run slow, even in computers with very fast CPUs. MOca will incorporate a re-compiler to turn the Byte code into native machine code. This should provide approximately a 10-time speed-up over a conventional JVM.

For the latest news on Finale products visit:  
<http://www.finale-dev.com/java.html>

## Voodoo Redux

In the May On Line, I covered a shareware e-mail program called Voodoo by Osmo Ahvenlampi, available from the AmiNet archives. About the time that issue hit the stands, Voodoo disappeared from AmiNet. Voodoo has returned as a commercial product with a suggested retail price of \$35, available from Finale Development.

An updated demo version (1.285) is available from the download page at: <http://www.finale-dec.com/download.html>

An updated version that recognizes the keyfiles previously received by shareware contributors is also available here.

## Microcode Solutions

Long recognized as an emulation guru, Jim Drew has produced a number of amazing products over the years. Often breaking new ground, he allowed Amiga users access to the Mac and PC worlds using their Amiga.

Now with a new company, Microcode Solutions (Figure 9), he has produced two new emulators for any Amiga with at least a 68020 processor. Fusion, for Macintosh emulation, and PCx, which emulates the Intel Pentium and compatibles. According to Microcode documentation, neither emulator requires any extra hardware, but Fusion will take advantage of Emplant or AMax hardware if present.

For the latest information and demos, check out the Microcode site at: <http://www.ctaz.com/~msdei>

## Where To Find Me

[rhays@kiva.net](mailto:rhays@kiva.net)

<http://www.kiva.net/~rhays>

[rhays@amigazone.com](mailto:rhays@amigazone.com)

R.Hays5 on Genie

72764,2066 on CompuServe

For U.S.Mail:

Rob Hays

P.O.Box 194

Bloomington, IN 47402

Please include a SASE if you need a personal reply.

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number(s), modem speeds, software settings, etc. As a service to the Amiga community I will include the information I receive in this column from time to time.

If you come across any World Wide Web sites you feel would be of

interest to the Amiga community, pass them along for inclusion in the HotList of the Month. Send the info to any of my addresses above.

That's all for now. See you on line!

•AC•

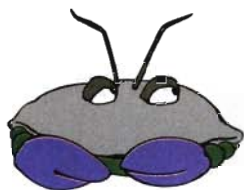


Figure 9: Microcode Solutions.

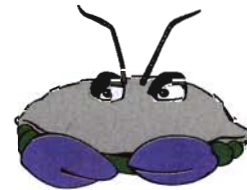


# This Old Workbench: Episode 10

## Hodgepodge and Miscellanea



### The Tooling of the Shells



by Dave Matthews

First of all, I owe a big apology to anyone who has written (e-mail or otherwise) over the past few months. I've been inexcusably remiss in my duties as host of This Old Workbench, but hopefully, I will catch back up.

#### The Tooling of the Shells

Now then, on with the show. Last episode I covered some highly useful system tools. This time around, let's have a look at the Amiga's shell. When the Amiga first shipped, it (like the Mac, and unlike most PCs) had a very sophisticated GUI. (Yes, I know, you newcomers look down your nose and poke fun at the ol' orange and blue look of the pre-2.0 WB, but trust me, even the pre-1.2 WB was in a class by itself in 1985.) Unlike the Mac, the Amiga also had a command line interpreter, rather like DOS and UNIX. While the early CLI was somewhat limited, the release of version 1.3 of the

OS gave the CLI quite a boost, with the introduction of the shell.

The shell offered many powerful improvements over the CLI. Probably one of the most useful features was the ability to make many commands resident. This meant the command was loaded into memory, and could thus be used without having to insert the Workbench disk (this was back when relatively few Amiga's had hard drives). Another excellent feature was a command history. This allows the user to recall earlier commands, without having to retype them, truly a time saver.

Well, the shell was quite a step up from the older CLI, but still, Amiga programmers, being an inventive (and demanding) lot, have over the course of time, wrought many improvements (and replacements) for the Amiga's trusty shell.

#### Vinced

Vinced is a full screen windowhandler for the console handler, and CON: and RAW:, written in 100% assembly language. Remember the old C64? Well, I still have warm toasty remembrances of the good ol' 8-bit days, and Vinced brings back one of my favorite features, the full screen editor. You can move the cursor anywhere in the shell window, to a command which has scrolled up, for instance, and press return to execute it. Vinced also has the best features from the Amiga's line oriented shell such as a command history, and its own bag of tricks.

*Vinced*

*Thor Software*

*Aminet: Util/Shell/Vinced.lha*

*util/shell 303K The final CON: solution, ^Z, XTerm, Intu*

*Dist: freeware*

*Requires: WB 2.04+*

#### Have It Your Way

Vinced is highly configurable, and comes with a simple and easy to use GUI to manage all of its options. As you can see from Figure 1, the Vinced preferences allows you control of numerous options, including Vinced's macros, buttons, shell features and more.

Figures 2 & 3 show a typical Vinced shell windows. While it may look rather plain to the shell shocked, long time CLI devotees will appreciate the buttons in the title bar, as well as the horizontal and vertical scroll bars. The small 'dot' button iconifies

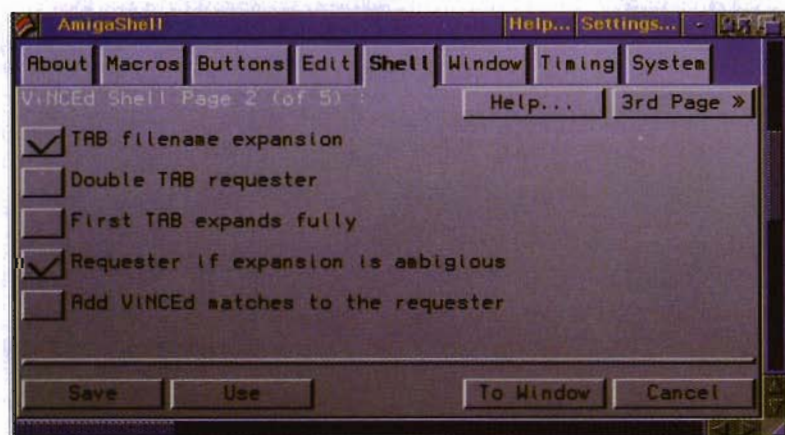


Figure 1. Vinced preferences allows you control of numerous options, including Vinced's macros, buttons, shell features and more.



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the window, the Help button calls up the AmigaGuide help file, and the Settings calls up the Preferences program. You can also see the menu functions Vincend adds to the screen.

Of course, in addition to the ease of use features like menus, scroll bars, and on-line help, Vincend offers the power user numerous goodies as well. One very nice feature is command expansion via the tab key. Type in the first few letters of your command, and hit the Tab key, and Vincend tries valiantly to guess the rest. This is mainly good for typing in long path names. If Vincend can't distinguish between several choices, a requester pops up allowing you to click on the desired choice.

Vincend also offers improved clipboard support, icon drop (drop a drawer icon, and Vincend will type in the path for you), a flexible Macro system, and a lot more.

Whether you are a long time shell wizard, or just use the shell for occasional tasks, Vincend is a definite must have.

### Put a little Magic in your File Requester

I've covered several file requester replacements in past episodes, but MFR (Magic File Requester) is easily the "prettiest" of the bunch. MFR offers all the standard improvements, including the "display directories first" option I'm partial to. MFR also offers some features the other file requesters don't, as well as an interesting and effective display layout. See figure 4 for MFR in action. If you've ever used an early version of ASDG's Art Department Pro, you'll find MFR a somewhat familiar, though highly evolved experience.

MFR (Magic File Requester)

Stefan Stuntz

Shareware

Aminet: mfr2\_0e.lha

util/boot

184K MFR 2.0e - file requester replacement

Requires: WB 2.04+, MUI

### Save our CED

If you want to use CygnusED Pro with MFR, you should download MFRHelp. This fixes a problem when loading a single file in Cygnus Ed with MFR. Unfortunately, I've had several other programs misbehave with MFR, most notably Visage, a picture viewer. For some reason, when selecting a picture to view using the MFR file requester, Visage tries to display every file in the directory, even if you select just one picture.

As always, your mileage may vary. Like all Workbench retrofits, a little care (and a lot of testing) exercised when installing new programs can save you much grief later on.

MFRHELP

Daniel Weber

Public Domain

Aminet: mfrhelp.lha

util/boot

4K+MagicFileRequester2.0<-

>CygnusEd3.5 fix





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### McFile Update

In the May 1997 issue of *Amazing Computing*, I covered McFile, a very useful disk cataloging tool. Well, since then, the author has released version 44b, which fixes the bug I mentioned concerning corrupting the catalog when updating a disk. If you need to get your disks organized, look no further.

McFile Update

McFile Disk Cataloger

Roberto Bizzarri

Aminet: McF44b.lha

biz/dbase

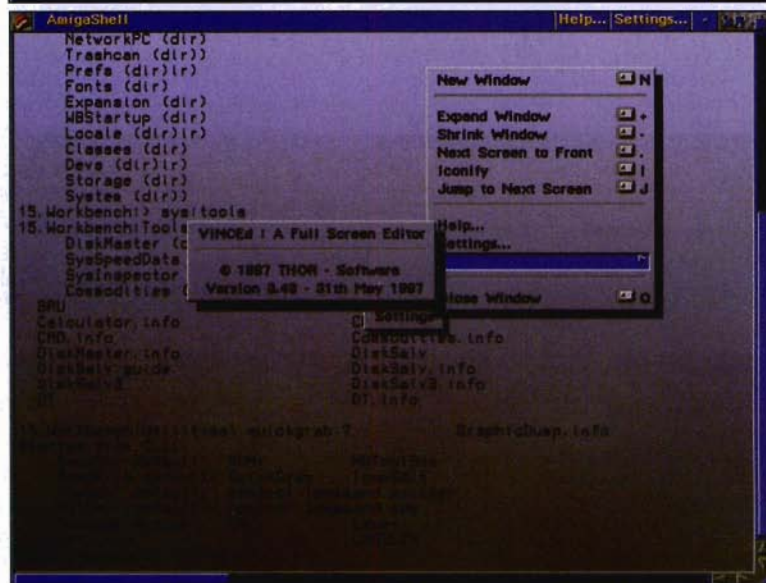
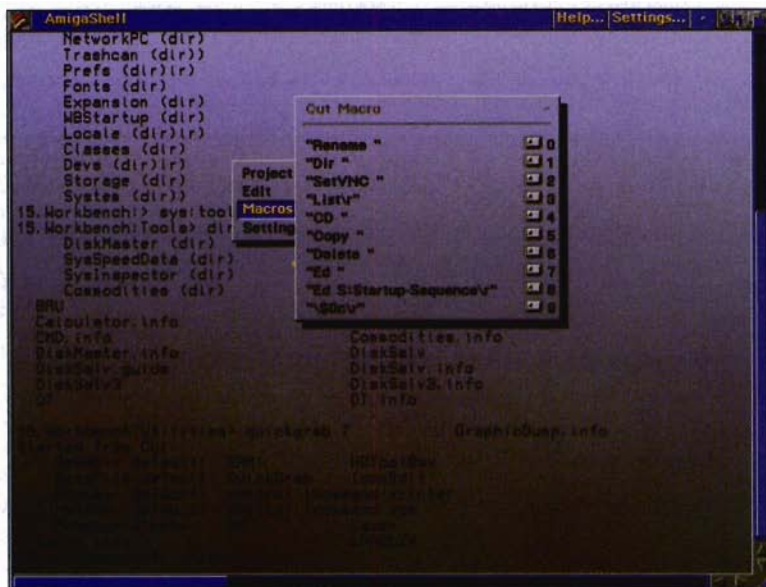
130K+\*McFile\* catalogues files and more!

### Shell we call it a day?

Well, that's about it for this issue. As ever, you can write to me care of *Amazing Computing*, or via e-mail: dm05438@navix.net



•AC•



Figures 2 & 3 (Top and Middle) Typical Vincen shell windows.

Figure 4 (Bottom). MFR (Magic File Requester) is easily the "prettiest" as it offers all the standard improvements, including the "display directories first" option.



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## PC-Task 4 and PCx: Emulating the PC

Can the Amiga truly find happiness in a world dominated by MS-DOS based software?

*Review by Marc Hoffman*

Computer software emulation has come a long way since the old days of the Commodore Amiga "Transformer." For those of us actually willing to remember, Commodore had promised a product that would run PC software without any kind of hardware add-on card. In other words, they said they had produced a very efficient software emulator of the PC. Unfortunately for Commodore, the Transformer didn't really turn out as well as they had planned. Speed wasn't all that good, and compatibility was even worse.

Commodore had two things going against them: processor

technology in 1987 wasn't as refined as it is today and programming skills and techniques were not as advanced. With today's more powerful processors and programming techniques, computer emulation is reaching the once unattainable goal of usable speed and realistic compatibility.

### So What's the Deal with Emulation, Anyway?

What is emulation? When a computer tries to emulate a foreign processor, such as the 68040 trying to emulate an 80486, some translation of code must happen before any program can run on the emulator. The 68040

processor and the 80486 processor are two very different chips and they execute computations in different ways. These "ways" of executing computations are known as instructions. Obviously, since the two chips have differing instruction sets, the emulation software must find a way to bridge the gap between the two.

There are two basic types of emulators. The first can be called an interpretive emulator. This type of emulation converts the instructions of the chip being emulated to the system's chip as it encounters them. But, after the instructions are converted and executed, they are "forgot-

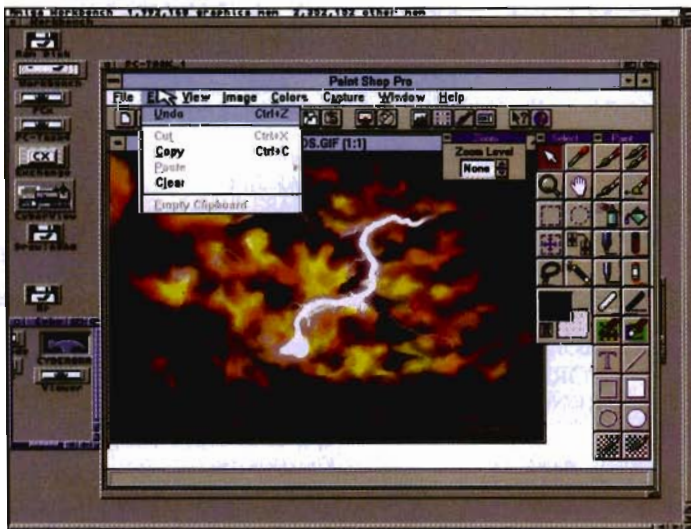


Figure 1 (Left) shows The PC-Task4 screen while Figure 2 (above) is a view of PCx.

ten." This can be a huge drawback if the goal is to make the emulation run as fast and as smooth as possible.

Imagine, for instance, a program that creates numerous looping functions that execute the same code over and over again. With the interpretive emulation scheme, this redundant code must be translated repeatedly—an obvious waste of time and computing power.

A dynamic emulator, our second type, fixes the waste problem in the interpretive scheme. When it encounters the foreign code, it translates that code into system code, executes the instruction and then stores the converted code in a special area of memory called a buffer. Whenever this particular code is needed again, the emulator does not retranslate it. Instead, the converted code is accessed within the memory buffer. While this process is severely memory intensive, it increases the speed of emulation quite nicely.

#### PC-Task 4

Last year, I reviewed PC-Task version 3.1. I remember many of the problems I had with the emulator dealt with compatibility and speed. I am pleased to say that Chris Hames, programmer of PC-Task, has addressed many of these issues. In version 3.1, the emulator could only handle the instruction set of an 80286. This processor, although good in its day, is really a dinosaur now. Most programs require at least an 80386 and version 4 has expanded support as far as the 80486. This adds the ability to use the MMU functions of a real 486 (via the MMU on the 68020 or later processor) and improved compatibility.

Several programs that I wouldn't even think of trying to run on 3.1, ran just fine under version 4. PC-Task also adds dynamic compilation (as demonstrated above). PC-Task allows the user to set the buffer size the dynamically compiled code will fit into. The buffer settings are as follows: Tiny (512k), Small (1.5MB), Medium (5.25MB), Large (9.5MB), and Huge (the amount of PC memory multiplied by 4 plus 2MB). Depending on your system, there is a great deal of flexibility.

PC-Task also comes in an interpretive version that does not use the dynamic compilation method for

## Emulation: Interpreters Speaking Dynamically

### Dynamic Compiling Emulation



- Intel Chip instructions are sent to the Emulation Software.
- The emulation software translates the Intel instructions into Motorola instructions.
- These instructions are then sent to the Motorola Processor for execution.
- After the instructions are executed, they are then forgotten.

### Interpretive Emulation



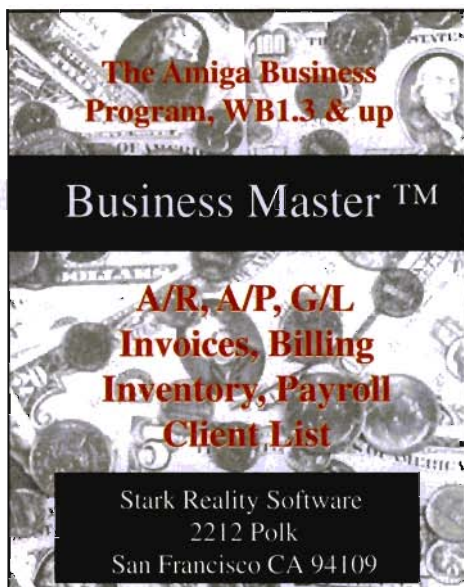
- Intel Chip instructions are sent to the Emulation Software.
- The emulation software translates the Intel instructions into Motorola instructions and sends these instructions to a special buffer where they can be stored and reused.
- Instructions from the buffer can be sent to the Motorola Processor for execution.
- After the instructions are executed, they can be recalled from the RAM buffer, therefore eliminating the need to recompile them. This makes emulation much faster.

people in low memory situations as well as programs that continually modify code "on the fly." This type of program causes problems with PC-Task Dynamic, slowing it down considerably. An example of such a program is "Doom."

PC-Task 4's support of hard drives and mass storage has changed

little since version 3.1. There are two methods for creating a hard drive usable under PC-Task. The first is a file disk, which is a single file that resides on the Amiga's hard drive. To the Amiga, it looks like a really big file. To PC-Task, it's a hard drive. Be forewarned, though: file disks are ex-





Circle 126 on Reader Service card.

tremely slow. To put things in perspective, the Amiga's hard drive is pretending to be a "fake" PC hard drive.

The alternative is to use a real PC hard drive; or at least an Amiga hard drive with a PC partition on it. This is by far the fastest way to access PC files, because for all intents and purposes, this is a real PC hard drive. What's the catch of the day? Well, PC-Task's methodology for creating these hard drive partitions is complicated. I was extremely disappointed to see that this new release of PC-Task had not changed its methods.

First, the user has to partition a section of the Amiga's hard drive to be used as the PC partition (granted, this step must be done regardless of which emulator is being used). Next, the user must go into the HDToolBox and get certain information on the partition. This information must then be entered and saved. This whole process is not easy, and not for the beginning user. The manual even states that making an actual PC partition is for advanced users only. It seems that beginning users must settle for the slower file disks. This definitely needs to be changed.

Video support has really been updated since version 3.1. In that earlier version, the Amiga could run Windows 3.1 in a maximum of 256 colors. But, there was a catch. There was no pointer support under 256 color Windows modes, and the screen redraws were too slow to be usable—even on my CyberVision 64 card.

Things have obviously changed since version 3.1. Support for 256 colors is in full swing, pointer and all. The graphics updates are very usable on my CyberVision 64, although I noticed that the updates were faster using the interpretive version. As with the earlier version, PC-Task offers the option of either running on a separate screen, or running within a window on the Workbench (see Figure 1).

In terms of serial support, I was unable to get PC-Task to run software such as Netscape Navigator. Well, Navigator did run, but I was unable to get PC-Task connected to the internet. I couldn't get any modem activity to work at all! When trying to run any type of telecommunications software, PC-Task literally quit without even saying good-bye. This problem needs to be fixed, and soon!

Sound support is the same as in earlier versions of PC-Task as well. The only sound support is the emulation of the standard sound on a bare-bones PC motherboard. This limits PC-Task to simple beeps and clicks. There is no SoundBlaster emulation of any kind.

## PCx

PCx is somewhat of a newcomer to the PC emulation market on the Amiga (see Figure 2). PCx emulates a different processor than PC-Task. Instead of going with the 80486, PCx uses the instruction set for a Pentium-class processor. But, there are some limitations.

One glaring limitation to PCx's Pentium emulation is that it cannot use an MMU. This means that Windows cannot be run in Enhanced Mode (PC-Task can, but rather slowly). PCx has what it calls "CPU Transcription." This is the same as dynamic compilation of code, described above. The buffer can also be set, but the sizes are somewhat more limiting: 64k, 128k, 256k, 512k, and 1MB. The results of CPU transcription under PCx were disappointing (see "Test Results").

Hard disk use under PCx is extremely simple when compared to PC-Task. Whereas PC-Task makes the user go into HDToolBox and record a bunch of numbers, PCx simply asks which partition is to be used as the PC partition, and that's it! The rest is handled transparently by the software. PC-Task could take a lesson from this sort of interface. PCx supports file

disks as well, but as easy as actual partitions are to make, it's hard to see why one would even bother with file disks.

There was one problem that I did find with my PCx partition, however. When I tried to boot off the partition, I would get a DOS error saying that there was a "non-system disk," making it impossible to boot. But, through trial and error, I found that if I quit PCx completely and restarted it, the partition booted normally.

Video under PCx is limited when compared with PC-Task. The software comes with video drivers that support the original and ECS Amigas, AGA Amigas, and graphics board equipped Amigas. Unfortunately, the only 256 color video mode which PCx supports is 320 x 200. This is a low resolution, and it makes the possibility of a 256 color windows screen impossible. On the up side, however, I did find that the actual video handling (screen updates, window redraws, etc.) was quite good. Microcode has promised an updated video driver which supports higher color resolutions at good speeds.

PCx seems to share the same deficiency as PC-Task when it comes to serial emulation. I could not get any kind of modem control or support to work at all out of PCx. Both emulators need work in this area!

Sound support under PCx can be summed up in one word: beautiful! Whereas PC-Task supports beeps and clicks, PCx supports SoundBlaster emulation. This support is in mono, however. Getting the sound to work was quite a challenge. I could find no place in the documentation that said how to get the sound up and running. And when I ran Windows, all the sound options (such as playing a simple .WAV file) were unavailable. Finally, I took the original Windows installation disks and installed a sound driver for the SoundBlaster. Once Windows restarted, I was greeted with the all too familiar TADA! sound file that greets all Windows 3.1 users. Not satisfied with this, I decided to try a more complex sound test. I took the sound data from the Batman and Robin QuickTime movie (about 5 minutes worth and about 2.5MB in size) and played it on PCx. It worked fine! I was very impressed, and Microcode should be commended for their work here.



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## OK—Which one is better?

I could say that both of these products are good and that the better product depends on the end user's needs. But, I won't do that. I will say that both products demonstrated excellent compatibility in many different areas. For example, PC-Task ran Fractal Design Painter just fine, and I was actually able to produce a picture using the program.

I was able to install and run QuickTime for Windows on both emulators. The difference here is that PC-Task couldn't play the sound files with the QuickTime movies, but it

could play the video. PCx could play the sound just fine, but it lacked the speed to play the video. I was even able to get an Atari ST emulator to run under PCx (but not under PC-Task)! Games such as Doom ran under both products as well.

Now for the long pants: PCx does have some very nice features, such as the afore mentioned sound support and easy hard drive setup options; but, it is intolerably slow. Even with the so called CPU transcription turned on, PCx ran too slow to be useful. I even found myself using PC-Task to do the majority of the unpacking and

installation work, simply because it was so much faster. I could then transfer this information over to the PCx partition via the supplied utilities with PC-Task, and by creating a DosDriver for PCx's partition.

PC-Task is not without its faults either, as with the above mentioned problems with creating and formatting hard drive partitions. But PC-Task is definitely faster, and it will handle programs that require an MMU. Based on my tests and my general subjective evaluation, I would have to choose PC-Task as the better of the two emulators.

## The Future

What is in the future for these two emulators? At present, neither of them can run Windows 95. Both Quasar and Microcode are working on a fix to remedy this situation, however. Microcode has also promised MMU support for PCx, as well as an updated video driver. When PowerPC Amigas become a reality, Microcode promises support. PC-Task's future includes SoundBlaster emulation as well as a possible PowerPC implementation. Only time will tell.

**Quasar Distribution**  
P.O. Box 101  
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<http://www.ozemail.com.au/~pctask/>  
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Price: \$90 (US)  
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## PCx

**Microcode Solutions**  
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Price : £ 49.95 UKP (Europe)  
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## TEST RESULTS

Tests were performed using Win Zip, 16-bit version. PCx and PC-Task tests were run on an Amiga 4000/040 running at 40MHz. SoftWindows tests were run on a PowerCenter150 (PPC604) running at 150MHz. Time is measured in minutes:seconds

PCx w/CPU transcription with a buffer size of 1mb (Turbo level =7)

1. Zip Archive = 3:47
2. UnZip Archive = 2:36

PC-Task w/CPU transcription with a buffer setting of LARGE

1. Zip Archive = 1:42
2. UnZip Archive = 1:26

PCx w/o CPU transcription (Turbo Level =7)

1. Zip Archive = 3:47
2. UnZip Archive = 2:36

PC-Task Interpretive version (no CPU transcription)

1. Zip Archive = 3:37
2. UnZip Archive = 2:23

SoftWindows'95 v.4 running Windows 3.11

1. Zip Archive = 12 seconds
2. UnZip Archive = 9 seconds

•AC•

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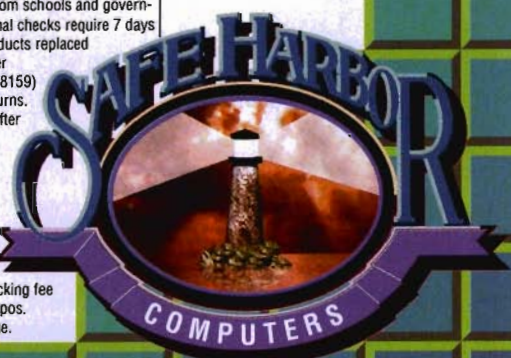
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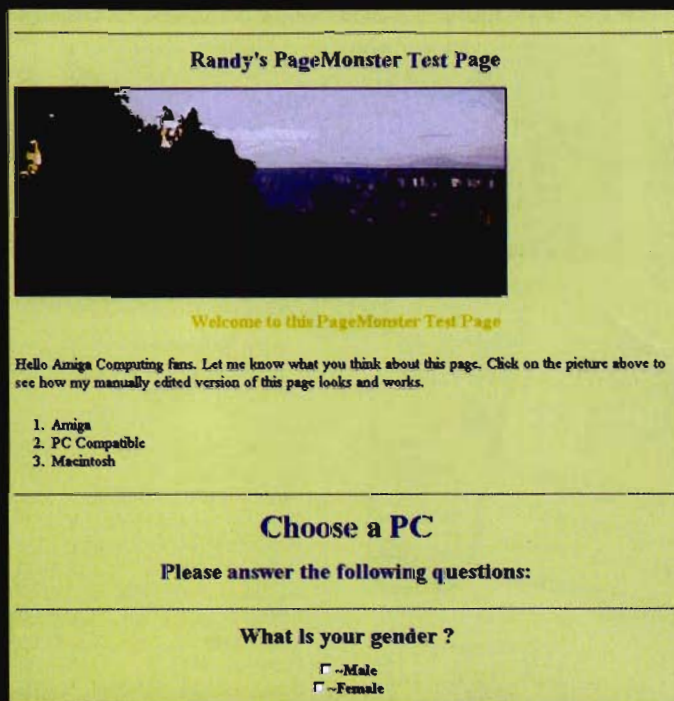
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# PageMonster

CultureShock Multimedia has fathered a web design program for Amigans with talents between skilled programmer and talented neophyte.

by Randy C. Finch



PageMonster: A Browser View of the Page Generated by PageMonster.

PageMonster is the new commercial program from CultureShock Multimedia designed to create Web pages using HTML on your Amiga. The evaluation copy of the software I received consisted of eight diskettes and a card containing system requirements, the license agreement, simple installation instructions, and a registration card, all inside a zip-lock sandwich bag. I assume the shipping version will be packaged

nicer than this. The cardboard cover indicated that the following was required to run the program: Amiga OS 3.0 or 3.1, 6 MB of memory, the AmigaVision Player and runtime libraries, and the Append command in the c: directory. Since I have an accelerated Amiga 2000 running Amiga OS 3.1 with 9 MB of memory and a copy of AmigaVision Professional, I was all set except for the Append command.

## Installation

In order to install PageMonster, I had to put a copy of Installer in my c: directory. Once this was in place, I inserted the INSTALL diskette and executed the installation program. This installed the main program from the INSTALL diskette as well as disks 1, 2, and 3. Music played during the installation which went off without a hitch (except the music continued to play after the installation until I closed a small unidentified window on the Workbench screen).

Next, I used the install program on the first of three diskettes labeled PMVOICE which contained the sound files including vocal help. Then, I used install on the TABLE PLUGI diskette. After completing the installation, I discovered the PageMonster directory occupied about 2 MB of disk space, and the PMVOICE directory occupied about 3 MB.

I knew I did not have all the previously mentioned required programs installed on my computer, but I wanted to see what would happen if I tried to execute PageMonster without the required programs. When attempting to load PageMonster, the message shown in Listing 1 appeared.

Although I own a copy of AmigaVision Professional, I did not have it installed. After installing the AmigaVision Player disk, I tried running PageMonster again. I received the same message shown above. The only file still missing was the Append command in the c: directory. However, I had no idea where to get this command file, and the message did not give me any clue as to how to obtain this program. Neither was there any printed information.

I decided to look for a readme file or a help file in the PageMonster directory that might have this information. I found



Figure 1 (top). The Main PageMonster Module.  
Figure 2. (bottom) The PageMonster Configuration Screen.

a file named HELP.guide. I loaded Multiview and in turn loaded the HELP.guide file. There were multiple links. When I tried to access a link, the appropriate file could not be located. After looking at the help file as ASCII, it appeared to me that the help file also needed to be in the root directory for the links to work correctly. I copied HELP.guide to the root directory and viewed it with Multiview. Everything then worked okay.

Fortunately, the information I sought was in the help file. Not only was the information about how to obtain the Append command available, but there was also directions on how to obtain the AmigaVision Player for those that do not own a copy of AmigaVision. There was also detailed instructions about how to install these files for novices. It turns out the Append command is available on Fred Fish disk #379. I loaded up my Fred Fish CD-ROM and found the program. There were two versions available: one in English, one in German. The two files were named Append.english and Append.deutsch. I copied the English version to my c: directory and renamed it Append. This allowed PageMonster to run without complaint.

## Running PageMonster

When I first ran the program, I was greeted with a short piece of music and the screen shown in Figure 1. The program is divided into modules. The six top-middle buttons are used to access the modules. Other buttons at the top and bottom of the screen provide further functionality. The window in the middle of the screen is the code window. After creating the different parts of a Web page using the modules, they can be added to this code window. Although code cannot be edited directly in the code window, a mouse click in the window causes PageMonster to load a favorite editor. Here, code can be added manually. Upon saving the edited file and exiting the editor, PageMonster will automatically pull in the edited code to its code window.

## Configuration

The first place to go after loading PageMonster is the Configuration screen. To get there, simply click on the CONFIG button. The screen in Figure 2 appears. Here, a favorite browser, editor, viewer, paint program, etc. can be specified. Some will have defaults initially, but they can be changed by either typing a new path and filename into the text boxes, or, for the ones with a button to the left, by clicking the button and selecting the file from a file requester window. If entering a name directly, the ENTER key MUST be pressed for the change to actually be recorded. Don't be fooled by the fact that it seems to be changed in the text box. This is true for all the text boxes throughout the program. DON'T FORGET TO PRESS ENTER.

Synthesized speech help can be activated by selecting the SPEECH button. However, for this to work, the translator.library and narrator.device files from earlier versions of the Amiga OS are required. If you don't have these files, don't worry. Just select the DIGITIZED button. This turns on the digitized voice files installed from the PMVOICE diskettes. This replaces the computer synthesized voice with a much more pleasant female voice. In either case, the speech is typically activated when moving between modules or activating some feature.

The SET COMMAND button activates a feature only available with the AWeb browser. The command in the text box will be executed when calling the GET LINKS operation in the Paragraph Module, when loading an in-line image in the Media Module, and when using the linked list function in the List Module. I do not own AWeb, so I was unable to test this feature. I will discuss the modules later.

There is a button for accessing Online Support. Clicking this will connect you to the Internet and load your browser. Unfortunately, my Amiga modem is not working and I was unable to test this. However, based on vothe messages I received on clicking the button, it appears all would have gone well. When finished



From Top to Bottom:

Figure 3. The Main PageMonster Help Page.

Figure 4. The Background Module.

Figure 5. The Main PageMonster Module After the Background Code was Added.

Figure 6. The Title Module.

## WEB ALERT!

For a larger view of these screenshots, please see the special web page on PageMonster at Amazing Computing's web address: [www.pimpub.com](http://www.pimpub.com).



editing the Configuration, the SAVE SETUP button needs to be pressed before returning to the main screen.

## HELP!

The PageMonster help file can be accessed from just about any screen within the program. Unfortunately, no matter where

you are at in the program, the main help screen appears (Figure 3). Context sensitive help is not available. The help file is concise and to the point. You should be able to figure out how to do just about anything using this file. One complaint I have is that when the help file is accessed from within PageMonster, the program cannot be used again until after exiting the help file. It would be nice if both were "live" simultaneously because sometimes you might want to do something in PageMonster while reading the directions in the help file.

## Backgrounds

Now that you know how to configure PageMonster and how to obtain help, let's move on to actually building a page. Most of the buttons that will be used are at the top of the main screen (Figure 1). The buttons are laid out in a logical order.

The first thing to do is set the background. Clicking on this button brings up the module shown in Figure 4. Here you can specify a background image, a background sound, as well as colors for the background, text, links, and visited links. Custom images can be stored in five different image buffers for quick access. The selected image and sound files can be previewed by selecting either the VIEW or PLAY buttons.

Background images can have a PNG, JPG, IFF, or no extension added to the selected filename. Sound files can have a WAV, AU, 8SVX, or no extension added to the selected filename. Loop play can also be specified (you are allowed to select this option upon specifying a sound file). If a background image is specified, DO NOT specify a background color. A background color overrides an image file.

Upon clicking the ACCEPT button, the appropriate code will be added to the code window on the main screen (Figure 5). If you enter the background module again, specify options, and click ACCEPT, additional code will be added to the code window. The previously added background code does not go away. To remove it, click in the code window to bring up the text editor, remove the old code, save the file, and exit the editor. The edited code will appear in the code window.

## Title

Now let's specify a title for our page. This module is shown in Figure 6. You can actually do more than just specify a title. The author's name and Email address as well as a comment line can also be added. An interesting feature is the client pull. By specifying a URL, turning on CLIENT PULL, and specifying a WAIT time, PageMonster will insert code that directs client pull enabled browsers to automatically load another Web page after the specified wait time in seconds. This can be useful if you change your home page and want the old page to automatically load the new page. It can also be useful for such things as a timed slide show. The appropriate code will be added to the Title module's code window upon pressing the ADD button. You will notice, however, that this code will not be added to the main screen's code window. This is because the six modules accessed via the six top-middle buttons on the main screen store their code in a separate file. The code can be merged with the main screen's code, but this will be discussed later.

## Header

The header module is shown in Figure 7. Just type in the text to appear at the top of the page in the one-line text box. The text can be made one of four preset sizes by selecting one of the four HEADER buttons above the text box. HEADER 1 provides the biggest size while HEADER 4 provides the smallest. The text can be centered by pressing the CENTER button. The code will be added to the top window upon pressing the ADD button.



From Top to Bottom:  
Figure 7. The Header Module.  
Figure 8. The Media Links Module.  
Figure 9. The Paragraph Module.  
Figure 10. The Lists Module.

## Media Links

The media links module (Figure 8) contains several utilities. There are buttons for accessing a paint program, to record a sound sample, execute an ARexx script, and rename a file. In-line images can be added and aligned (make sure the alignment is chosen before adding the in-line image). These images can be links to other PageMonster pages using the DIRECTORY button. Files that are to be handled by external programs can be added. Links to other Internet sites can be added. External files and Internet links can be stored for use in the Paragraph and List modules. Also, an image or sound file can be viewed or played before being inserted into the code window.

When creating an Internet link, a screen appears that allows the default address (normally a home page) to be added. Mailto:, http:, and ftp: sites can also be added. Many directories on Aminet and others are already built in so they can be added without looking them up and typing them in.

As various features on this screen are used, the code first appears in the one-line text box in the middle of the screen. There it can be edited before it is inserted into the code window using the ADD button. Remember, if you accidentally add something to the code window you don't want, click in the code window to bring it up in an editor where it can be removed.

## Paragraph

The paragraph module screen (Figure 9) allows regular text to be added to the page. There are buttons for creating header text and inserting the HTML break code. You can make text bold, centered, and/or italicized. The color of the text can also be set. Links created in the Media Links module can be inserted for creating hypertext. If an ASCII file already exists, it can be used for the paragraph. Each of the nine lines labeled L1 through L9 can be edited individually.

## Lists

The list module screen (Figure 10) allows an ordered, unordered, definition, or linked list to be created. Graphics can be added as bullets. However, I was unable to get this feature to work correctly. Nested lists can also be created. That's about all that can be said. It is a pretty straightforward module.

## Forms

The forms module screen (Figure 11) allows forms to be added. Four predefined forms are available: address, catalog, order, and questionnaire. All forms automatically have Submit and Reset buttons added to end of them. The SB button allows a button to be created that searches AltaVista for word(s). Pressing the button in a browser will initiate the search.

A disadvantage is you are limited to the predefined forms unless you write the HTML code yourself. PageMonster addresses this issue to some degree with plug-in programs that can generate other types of forms. The plug-in can be another AmigaVision program, an executable program, or an ARexx script. Of course, you will either have to write the plug-in yourself or wait for someone else to write it.

I tried out the questionnaire form (Figure 12). I only included one question, but more can be added. When finished, be sure to click NEXT QUESTION before accepting. Check boxes or radio buttons can be used for the multiple choice answers. If the ADD SURVEY INFORMATION button is checked, then questions about the person being surveyed are added automatically. These include: gender, age group, income bracket, name, email, address, city, state, and zip.

One problem I found here is that the multiple choice survey questions used check boxes for the answers. This means a person can check more than one answer for a question. It would have been preferable to display the answers as radio buttons. However, even here I found a problem. I had specified that the

question I entered have answers as radio buttons. PageMonster satisfied my request, but it gave each button a different name, which meant they were not related in any way and more than one could be selected. By manually editing the code to change the name of each button to a common name, this can be corrected.





## Plug-ins

Obviously, as HTML is enhanced, PageMonster could fall behind. PageMonster accounts for this by allowing plug-in modules that add functionality to the program. Anybody can create these plug-ins and make them available to others. As with the Forms module, the plug-ins can be AmigaVision programs, executable programs, or ARexx scripts. There is information in the help file that gets you started on creating plug-ins using AmigaDOS scripts, ARexx scripts, and AmigaVision programs.

Two plug-ins come with PageMonster. One is the Background module discussed earlier. It is special in that the main program knows how to find it automatically. Other plug-ins have to be selected via a file requester. The other plug-in included with the program is the one installed from the eighth diskette. It is an AmigaVision program that allows tables to be created. Its screen is shown in Figure 13. Notice the buttons near the bottom labeled HEADER, MEDIA, etc. By clicking on these buttons, the code generated by all the other modules can be inserted into the table. The B1-B3 buttons allow the code in buffers 1-3 to be inserted. Also, ASCII files can be added.

## Index

There is another module available that creates an index page of all other PageMonster pages. This can be exceptionally helpful in generating on-line databases for your site.

## Putting it All Together

Now that all the different parts of our page are created, it is time to put it all together. Click on the EDIT MODE button. After a bit, the program will enter ASSEMBLE MODE. Now when the module buttons are clicked, the code created in that module is inserted into the code window (Figure 14) at the end of the existing code. At anytime, the RULE button can be clicked to insert either a plain or graphic horizontal rule line. Also, if the B1, B2, or B3 button is highlighted, pressing the BACKUP button will put the code currently in the code window into one of three buffers. Pressing the INSERT button will add the buffer content to the code window.

Be sure to save your project so you don't lose it. The save screen has options for compressing your directories, going online, and uploading your pages. ARexx scripts can be executed if needed for TCP stacks requiring this. The complete code will be in a file named YourProjectName.html where YourProjectName is the name you gave your project while saving it.

## Final Word

I put together a test page. The final code is shown in Listing 2 and the way it looks with a browser is shown in the Title Pic on page 42. If you want to see how it looks with your browser, you can access it on my home page at <http://fly.hiwaay.net/~rcfinch/pmpage.html>. By clicking on the picture at the top of the page, you can view another version of this page that I created by manually editing the one created by PageMonster. Clicking on this page's picture takes you back to the original page. Compare the pages and their source code to see how I changed the original.

I will have to say that PageMonster seemed to be quite stable. I never crashed it. But I did have a problem with the bullet graphic in the Lists module. I could not get the program to insert the proper code to add the graphics. The program can be slow, especially when a large AmigaVision plug-in is being loaded. And it takes a long time to load the main program (45 seconds on my system). But this is to be expected from a rather large AmigaVision program.

If you look at the HTML code generated by PageMonster in Listing 2, you will see that the code is improper, with missing

<HEAD></HEAD> tags, no closing </HTML> tag, etc. These omissions are relatively minor and will not preclude most browsers from displaying the page properly. However, I like having my code as pristine as possible, so I would probably go in and manually add the missing tags.

There are two features in particular that I would like to see added. One is an Undo option for the last action taken. The other is the ability to place the cursor at a position in the code window and have inserted code go there rather than at the end of the existing code.

My greatest complaint is simply the way the program is designed. I like to use a program that acts as an editor and allows me to add tags via drop-down menus or buttons, like the way WebDesign works. This requires more knowledge of HTML, but since I am a programmer, this does not bother me. Plus, it gives me a greater sense of control over my code. If I could not use this type of program, I would prefer a WYSIWYG program that is basically a browser with a design program built in. This would require essentially no knowledge of HTML. PageMonster lies precariously between these two extremes. Of course, different people prefer different programs. PageMonster may be just the program for you, but it's not for me.

While writing this review I received, by Email, an LHA file containing a version 1.01 update. Unfortunately, a couple of files in the archive were corrupt and I could not update my copy of PageMonster. I went to CultureShock Multimedia's Web site (address below), but I could not find the update file. CultureShock Multimedia has quite a nice Web site with online documentation, sample voice files and other files to download (including new plug-ins), links to other Amiga sites, and much more. Check it out.

**PageMonster**  
**CultureShock Multimedia**  
2319 North 45th St., Suite 296  
Seattle, WA 98103  
[cshock@serv.net](mailto:cshock@serv.net)  
<http://www.serv.net/~cshock/main.html>  
Before July 1997: \$49.95  
Afterwards: \$69.95

•AC•

## Listing 1.

Error Message Presented When First Running PageMonster

\*\*\*\*\* ERROR ! \*\*\*\*\*

PAGEMONSTER CANNOT LOAD BECAUSE ONE OR MORE  
OF THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS ARE NOT MET:

1. The AVPlayer is NOT INSTALLED in C:
2. The camd.library is NOT INSTALLED in libs:
3. The avtextgad.library is NOT INSTALLED in libs:
4. The avbd.library is NOT INSTALLED in libs:
5. The realtime.library is NOT INSTALLED in libs:
6. The Append command is NOT INSTALLED in C:
7. The Ed command is NOT INSTALLED in C:

SYSTEM 3.0 COMMANDS MISSING

8. The Copy command is NOT INSTALLED in C:
9. The Delete command is NOT INSTALLED in C:
10. The Requestfile command is NOT INSTALLED in C:

THESE SYSTEM FILES ARE NEEDED FOR PAGEMONSTER  
TO RUN PROPERLY.

## Listing 2.

The Final PageMonster HTML Test File

```
<HTML>
<BODY BGCOLOR="#F5F5DC" TEXT="#436EEE" LINK="#9B30FF" VLINK="#CD6090">
<BGSOUND SRC="sounds/wpmv.wav">
<HR>
<!-- DOC TYPE PUBLIC HTML 3.2 -->
<!-- Author: Randy C. Finch -->
<!-- Email address: rcfinch@hiwaay.net -->
<!-- Comments: This is my first Web page produced with PageMonster -->
<!-- Generated by PageMonster version 1.0 on 05/24/1997 -->
<title>Randy Finch's PageMonster Page</title>
<P>
<CENTER><H2>Randy's PageMonster Test Page</H2></CENTER>
<P>
<A HREF="pmpage2.html"><IMG SRC="media/GrandCanyon06.jpg" ALIGN="middle"></A>
<P>
<FONT COLOR="#FFD700"><CENTER><B><H3>Welcome to this PageMonster Test
Page</H3></B></CENTER></FONT>
<BR>
Hello Amiga Computing fans. Let me know what you think about this page.
Click on the picture above to see how
my manually edited version of this page looks and works.
<P>
<P>
<ol>
<li>Amiga
<li>PC Compatible
<li>Macintosh
</ol>
<P>
<HR>
<CENTER><H1>Choose a PC</H1></CENTER>
<P>
<CENTER><H2>Please answer the following questions:</H2></CENTER>
<HR>
<FORM ACTION="/cgi-bin/mailform/cshock@serv.net" METHOD=POST>
<CENTER><H2>What is your gender ?</H2></CENTER>
<P>
<CENTER><B><INPUT NAME="GENDER" TYPE="checkbox" VALUE="Male">-Male</B></CENTER>
<CENTER><B><INPUT NAME="GENDER" TYPE="checkbox" VALUE="Female">-Female</B></CENTER>
<P>
<CENTER><H2>What age group are you in ?</H2></CENTER>
<P>
<CENTER><B><INPUT NAME="AGE" TYPE="checkbox" VALUE="18-29">-Age 18 thru
29</B></CENTER>
<CENTER><B><INPUT NAME="AGE2" TYPE="checkbox" VALUE="30-45">-Age 30 thru
45</B></CENTER>
<P>
<CENTER><B><INPUT NAME="AGE3" TYPE="checkbox" VALUE="45-65">-Age 45 thru
65</B></CENTER>
<CENTER><B><INPUT NAME="AGE4" TYPE="checkbox" VALUE="65-85">-Age 65 thru
85</B></CENTER>
<P>
<CENTER><H2>What income bracket do you fall in ?</H2></CENTER>
<P>
<CENTER><B><INPUT NAME="INCOME1" TYPE="checkbox" VALUE="0-10">-$0-20,000</B></CENTER>
<CENTER><B><INPUT NAME="INCOME2" TYPE="checkbox"
VALUE="20-40">-$20-40,000</B></CENTER>
<CENTER><B><INPUT NAME="INCOME3" TYPE="checkbox"
VALUE="40-70">-$40-70,000</B></CENTER>
<P>
<CENTER>
<H2>Which PC do you like best?</H2>
<P>
<INPUT TYPE="radio" NAME="Amiga" VALUE="Amiga">-Amiga
<INPUT TYPE="radio" NAME="PC Compatible" VALUE="PC Compatible">-PC
Compatible
<INPUT TYPE="radio" NAME="Macintosh" VALUE="Macintosh">-Macintosh
<P>
</CENTER>
<P>
<CENTER><B>NAME: <INPUT TYPE="text" Name="name" SIZE=30></B></CENTER><BR>
<CENTER><B>EMAIL: <INPUT TYPE="text" Name="Email" SIZE=30></B></CENTER><BR>
<CENTER><B>ADDRESS: <INPUT TYPE="text" Name="Address" SIZE=27></B></CENTER><BR>
<CENTER><B>CITY & STATE: <INPUT TYPE="text" Name="CityState" SIZE=23></B></CENTER><BR>
<CENTER><B>ZIP CODE: <INPUT TYPE="text" Name="Zip" SIZE=28></B></CENTER><P>
<P>
<INPUT TYPE="submit" value="SEND"> <INPUT TYPE="reset" value="CLEAR">
<P>
<CENTER><H2>NOTE: The SEND button does NOT work between I never wrote a
CGI script for
it.</H2></CENTER>
</FORM>
<HR>
```

(continued from page 48)

Petro: Yes.

AC: What about licensing? You said the Amiga Inc. people are going to be responsible for licensing sales now?

Petro: Yes, at the moment, I am doing all the licensing. I will assist them. It is a question of how we will organize the company structure. We can use the income from licensing to fund things.

Currently, I'm working with merchandise licensing. I already have companies in the US who would like to produce Amiga T-shirts etc. We will announce everything on our web page.

MicroniK is experiencing very good success and Amiga International just sold a lot of units worldwide. Soon, I will also have the NTSC conversion kits available for the North American market. Computer City, which is responsible now for Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands, told me they are improving their business daily. We have found new distributors, and I think we have really improved. It is a lot of fun.

AC: We don't have anyone licensed to do 4000 Towers yet?

Petro: Yes, we are talking with QuikPak and that is very positive. QuikPak will also be the Tower manufacturer.

AC: When MicroniK gets their NTSC conversion kits, I assume you will have NTSC conversion kits for standard A1200s for North America?

Petro: Right. I have some new quantities which are being offered through Software Hut. Software Hut is also improving rapidly—they are buying a lot of A1200s.

The price for an A1200 is expensive in the US, I know, I have investigated. But, because there is import duty, a conversion to NTSC and a new power supply, and freight, this is an additional incremental cost. I have tried to cut down our prices dramatically in the North American market. I am quite sure, in the Christmas quarter, the prices for the A1200 in the US market will be very attractive.

AC: You are working off of existing inventory at this point?

Petro: I'm working out of existing inventory.

AC: Are you going to start manufacturing A1200s again?

Petro: If there is a demand.

AC: At that time, is it possible A1200s will also be built in North America to save on the import duty?

Petro: We can do this if there is a market. It depends on the quantity requested. If we have only two or three thousand units, it makes no sense. But, if there is a big demand, if we find a customer who would like to use the A1200 for network computers, then it makes sense and I will be the first one who will rev up the production line.

AC: Does Amiga Inc. take any authority away from you?

Petro: I don't believe I have lost any authority. I can't manage everything, it is too much. If you want to grow, you need an organization.

AC: This is what you expected ever since Gateway picked up the Amiga?

Petro: Absolutely. I need support, I need people, I cannot run everything by myself.

We will be a separate entity. Amiga Inc. and Amiga International will run our own businesses independently from Gateway 2000. Of course, we will be funded by Gateway 2000, but, we are responsible for our own business. I enjoy working with these professional people. It's really great.

AC: If users want to see things in the new systems, they should send e-mail and so forth to Amiga Inc.?

Petro: Yes. We have an e-mail addresses for Jeff Schindler, which is schinjeff@amiga.de.

We will continue to be open with our users with information and open communication to the Amiga community. We need input, and we will remain informative to the outside.

AC: Everything's progressing as well or better than you expected?

Petro: I would say so. I'm very, very optimistic. I am really more convinced than ever that we have a very bright future.

AC: We appreciate your time and thank you very much.

•AC•



# AC: EXCLUSIVE: An Interview with Petro Tyschtschenko, Managing Director, Amiga International Inc.

# AMIGA

Petro explains that there are now two Amiga companies with one united goal.

*At press time, AC discovered a message on the Amiga web site ([www.amiga.de](http://www.amiga.de)). It referred to a meeting in the US between several Amiga enthusiasts and a new company called Amiga Inc. AC thought the best way to discover what was happening would be to contact Petro Tyschtschenko of Amiga International for more information. Petro suggested the following telephone interview to keep the Amiga market informed of the Amiga's efforts.*

**AC:** We've heard rumors that Gateway 2000 has created a separate company aside from Amiga International called "Amiga Inc." What is the purpose of Amiga Inc.?

**Petro:** The Amiga will be organized into two companies: the technology and licensing company, called "Amiga Inc.", and the international sales and marketing company, Amiga International Inc.

Amiga Inc. is a wholly owned and independent company of Gateway 2000. Amiga Inc. will be responsible for all hardware and software design, managing, licensing, and development of intellectual properties. The headquarter for Amiga Inc. will be in the US, Dakota Dunes.

**AC:** You will remain as the Managing Director of Amiga International Inc.?

**Petro:** Yes. Amiga International Inc's headquarters will be Langen, Germany, with myself as Managing Director. Amiga Inc. will be managed by Jeff Schindler as General Manager.

**AC:** This is a partnership arrangement?

**Petro:** Yes, we are team workers. Amiga Inc. will develop the product and Amiga International will sell it. I will be responsible for worldwide sales and marketing and, because I have developed some connections, I will assist Amiga Inc. in licensing as well.

**AC:** Will Amiga Inc. be doing any marketing or sales for North America?

**Petro:** They will have OEM sales and business contracts, plus product marketing for the products they are developing.

**AC:** When does this become effective?

**Petro:** At the moment a new building is under construction in Dakota Dunes which will be finished in October. In the meantime, Amiga Inc. will rent something.

What we are doing is all on our web page. We want to mobilize the troops (chuckles) of the Amiga community.

**AC:** I saw a list of names from a recent conference?

**Petro:** Yes, we invited Joe Torre, Fleecy Moss, Dean Brown, Andy Finkle, Alain Penders, Gary Kolisli, Jason Compton, and Jessie McClusky. This was under direction of Jeff Schindler and I attended as well. We talked about the history, of the Amiga and about the future—what we eventually can do, how we can strategize a business, and so on.

We have already prepared a business plan for this activity, which is waiting for approval at the moment. We have to get all the funds from Gateway, so they have to approve this and go through all the details.

Then we will hire people. Our plan is to have, by the end of the year (maybe, if everything is running well), an organization formed of as many as 30 people in Amiga Inc.

**AC:** There are eight people on the list from your web site, five of which are Industry Council Open AMIGA Initiative (ICOA) members. Isn't that a little heavy on the ICOA?

**Petro:** This was mostly for a discussion of ideas, what they are doing and what concerns they have, as well as to discuss our plans. For Jeff Schindler, who is in charge of Amiga development, this is also a learning process. He wants to understand the mentality of

the Amiga, its market and its users. There will not only be ICOA members. There will be fresh blood coming from Gateway 2000 and others. Because we need balance as well.

**AC:** Are these eight people going to be a part of Amiga Inc.?

**Petro:** Maybe, it has not been finalized. It is still in discussion. But, I would say the possibility is very high.

**AC:** What was derived from this meeting was basically a plan of attack, as far as the Amiga, product lines, and so forth?

**Petro:** We discussed possibilities and strategy—what we are thinking and what they are thinking. This was the first meeting we have had to get to know each other and discuss ideas. There is a lot of knowledge and information to cover and these people are very enthusiastic. We discussed possibilities until 3 o'clock in the morning. The meeting was very useful. I also would like to see other people—Individual developers and companies like Haage & Partner, who have done software development and who also have good ideas to contribute.

Amiga International and Amiga Inc. will work as a team. Jeff Schindler and I are in daily contact. It is very good. I can change my thoughts. He can change his thoughts. We work very closely together. I cannot do everything by myself.

**AC:** You are not on the brink of making any announcements about new products, or availability of products, or anything else are you?

**Petro:** First, we want to announce our organization and our plans. The first goal is, as I told everybody in London at the World of Amiga (Please see *Amazing Computing* July 1997), to upgrade the Amiga OS. Part of this is to examine the existing hardware, and review the hardware documentation which is available on CD-ROM. I have placed the entire Amiga documentation on optical disc. The hardware specialists will review this documentation, and then we will search for partners and so on. We will develop the business in a very professional manner and we will do whatever is necessary to keep the Amiga going.

**AC:** Do you have an expected delivery date for a new operating system?

**Petro:** Our goal is the November Cologne Computer Fair, but I really can make no commitment because time has already slipped since May. At the World of Amiga in May, it was realistic to be ready in November, but we have to look at what is in existence, what we can combine, and what we still have to do. It is difficult to make a promise for November, but I believe we will have, by springtime, an upgraded 3.1 which will be the new 3.5.

**AC:** The Cologne, Germany show was the original German Amiga show?

**Petro:** Cologne is the biggest computer fair and I hope I can change the name next year into the World of Amiga. It was started as the World of Commodore and, when Commodore went bankrupt, they changed the name into Computer '94 and so on. The fair attracts about 50 thousand people every year, most of them, 80 percent, are Amiga users. Hopefully, we will change this next year to World of Amiga.

**AC:** You don't know if it's possible, but you are still shooting for the November date for an update on the Amiga OS?

**Petro:** Yes, we are still shooting for the November date. Maybe we will show a sample at the Fair. My plan is to have a big booth there. We hope to have several guests demonstrating their products, and I will try to organize a developer conference and seminars.

**AC:** So, this November, if your business is Amiga, your business is to be in Cologne?

(continued on page 47)



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